

Towards a Society based on Mutual Aid, Voluntary Cooperation & the Liberation of Desire

#31/Winter '92

\$2.50

# Anarchy

*A journal of Desire Armed*



Collage by Freddie Baer

*Special issue on*  
***Women, Gender & Anarchy***





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## ANARCHY notes

Welcome to the Winter '92 issue of *Anarchy*! We've finally pulled off our long-awaited issue on "Women, Gender & Anarchy." We think you'll agree it was worth the wait.

This issue of *Anarchy* features essays and contributions from several different points of view on this theme, including L. Susan Brown's "Beyond feminism: Anarchism and human freedom," Laure Akai's "The women's movement and the reaction against it," Iris Mills' "Feminism: Disarmed? Indulgent? Introverted?" and Liz Highleyman's "Anarchism and gender: Sexual orientation politics." A highlight of the issue is Amy Meselson's thorough overview of the Mujeres Libres movement during the period of the Spanish Revolution. Ruth Hubbard contributes "There is no 'natural' human sexuality," while Adrian Kollantai gives us "A few words on men's liberation" as well. And, of course, our serialization of Raoul Vaneigem's *The Revolution of Everyday Life* continues with chapter ten, "Down quantity street." While graphically, this issue features another front cover collage by Freddie Baer and a back cover photo reproduction by Mikell Zhan.

## Price Increase

Of course, the first thing many people will notice about this issue is that the cover price has increased by 50c to \$2.50. Subscription rates will also be increasing as of March 1st, so if you want to renew or extend your subscription at our old rates, do it now! We decided it was time to make this change for several reasons. The first is that we're a bit unhappy with how much material we simply can't print due to the limited space in each issue. With this issue, we've gone from our usual 36 pages to 44 pages in order to include more, and this has increased the cost of both printing and postage. Secondly, though we'd hoped that our circulation would increase fast enough to cover our already increased costs of printing and postage (since the beginning of 1991),

we've instead barely been keeping our head above water. This cover price increase should help us to continue to pay our bills on time. Thirdly, if we're going to be able to continue improvements in the look and distribution of this magazine, we simply need to achieve a better financial status now. It's not only disappointing that we haven't been able to do things we'd like to improve the magazine, it's also demoralizing in the long run to publish with the perpetual threat of having to reduce our size and coverage just in order to be able to pay our bills. We hope you'll agree that *Anarchy* is well worth the extra 50c per issue, or \$2.00 per year. At \$2.50 per copy, *Anarchy* is still cheaper than a six-pack! And far more entertaining and informative than one.

## Next issues

The upcoming Spring '92 issue should focus on the theme of "Libertarian Fiction." We are still encouraging submissions on this theme, though (as always) we cannot guarantee that everything submitted will make it into print. There is also a strong possibility that the Summer issue may focus on an "Anti-Columbus"/"Abandoning Civilization" theme. We're also looking for submissions on this subject.

At this point suggestions for future issues still include "Anarchy & Violence," "Anti-organization," "Libertarian Education" (or "[Mis]education"), "Crime & Punishment" (probably the most popular suggestion), "Anti-technology," "Psychiatry/Mental Illness," "Transportation," and "False Opposition." Readers, please let us know what you'd like to see us cover most! Submissions are always welcome for upcoming issues.

Another question is whether the *North American Anarchist Review* is really worthwhile? So far it hasn't received enough support to avoid being a drain on our finances. We clearly consider that the reviews published there are important and that getting information out on anarchist/libertarian publications is critical if they are to reach a greater audience. Should we continue with this effort, aimed explicitly at better publicizing anarchist publishing, despite the

Continued on next page

## ANARCHY CONTACT NETWORK

This is a listing of addresses of groups and individuals who would like to see the growth and development of a *post-situationist, anti-ideological revolutionary tendency*. The list will help enable those participating to make regional contacts and intercommunication links.

If you'd like to see your address added to this listing please write to us, stating your basic perspectives on anarchist & situationist theory/practice and the critique of ideology, as well as why you wish to be listed. We are only looking for contacts who are seriously/playfully interested in anarchic communication & action. Vague commitments to "anarchism" or "anti-authoritarianism" will not be accepted as adequate reasons for inclusion, since this contact list is meant to serve a more specific purpose.

(Note: We are only compiling this list, we are not endorsing the positions of those who have asked to be listed.)

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	<b>(d)anger</b> POB 203 Portland, OR. 97201

This listing will be updated twice a year to make sure those listed really are interested in being listed, and that they are still answering inquiries. If your name has been removed from this listing, it is because you didn't reply to the last mailing sent out. Let us know once again that you're interested, and we'll return your address to the listing in the next issue.

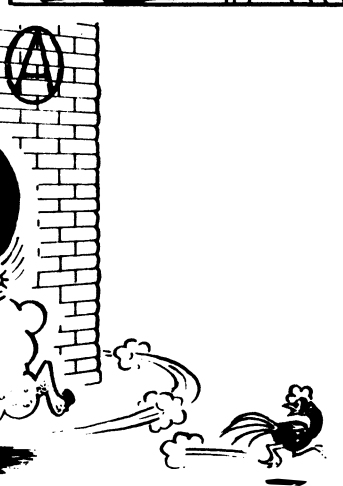
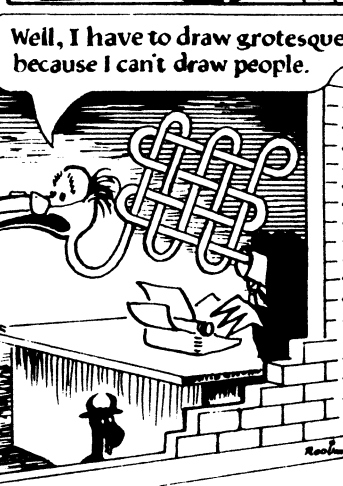
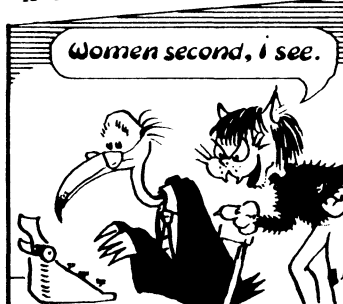
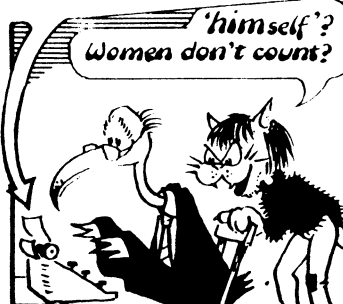
## Wildcat Strikes Again by Donald Room

Anarchy will be when every individual has absolute sovereignty over himself.

Anarchy will be when every individual has absolute sovereignty over himself, or herself.

Anarchy will be when every individual has absolute sovereignty over himself, or herself, or himself.

Anarchy will be when every individual has absolute sovereignty over himself, or herself, or himself, or herself.



## Mailing codes

For those who are interested in such things, if you received this issue of *Anarchy* by mail, there was likely a short code in the upper right corner of the mailing label. The code key follows (the number in the codes almost always indicates the last issue number of your subscription):

"(31)" indicates that you are a U.S. subscriber whose subscription will run out with this issue or that for some other reason we're sending you a copy of the current issue. Other numbers alone indicate that your subscription will end with that number or already has ended with that number. So, if your mailing code indicates that your subscription has ended with this issue, now is the time to renew!

"(P31)" indicates that you are receiving a free prisoner's subscription, but that it will expire with the issue number indicated unless you contact us to let us know that you wish to continue receiving *Anarchy*!

"(S31)" indicates that you paid a little extra to receive your subscription in plain brown envelopes.

"(Z31)" indicates that you paid even more in order to receive your subscription by 1st class mail in plain brown envelopes.

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"(X)" indicates that we exchange (or at least wish to exchange) with your periodical on a regular (all-for-all) basis, and that you publish in the U.S. If we hear from you, we'll most likely continue sending *Anarchy*. If we don't, sooner or later (probably sooner) we'll stop sending it.

"(X31)" indicates that we are exchanging with you on an issue-for-issue basis, and that you indeed have sent us a copy of your publication since our last issue was mailed out.

"(FX)" indicates that we exchange with your periodical (or wish to) and that you publish outside the U.S. Keep sending us your publication, and most likely we'll keep sending you ours, even if it drives both of us into bankruptcy.

"(M10)" indicates that for one reason or another we're sending you multiple copies of each issue of *Anarchy* usually in the amount of the number following the "M." You might be a bookstore or distributor. You might just be a good friend or special contributor. If you get a bill with your multiple copies you're probably one of the former. If you don't get billed, consider yourself one of the latter!

"(C31)" indicates that you've been a contributor to *Anarchy* at some point, and we're sending you a free subscription ending with the issue number given.

For those whose mailing codes don't make sense by this schema, maybe we marked them wrong, maybe we forgot them, or just maybe you're not who you seem!

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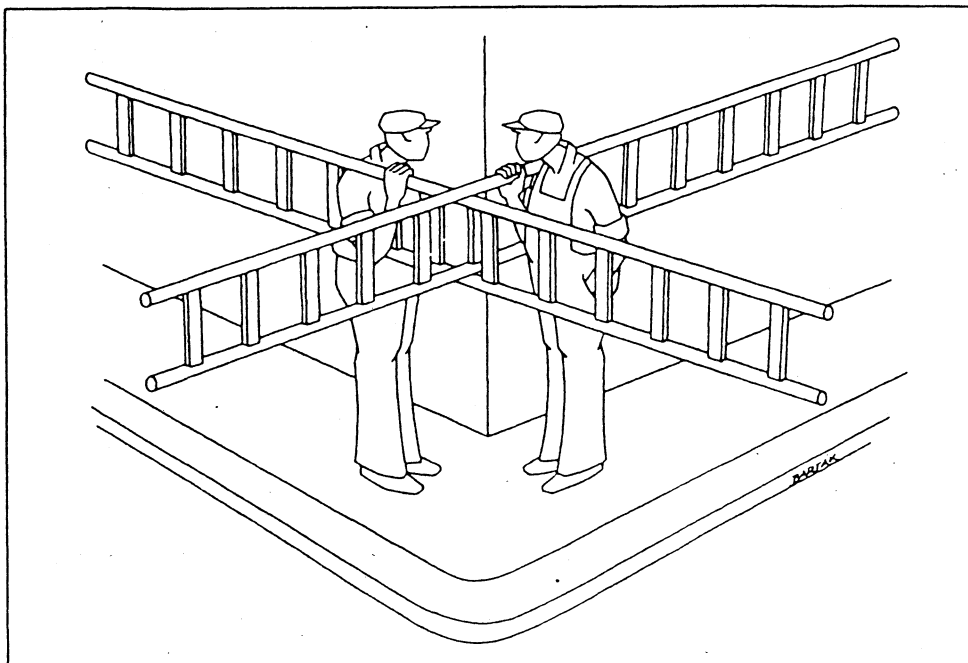
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## ANARCHY notes

Continued from previous page

relative lack of support, or should we drop it and concentrate on *Anarchy*?

### Fund raising appeal

To this point in the evolution of this magazine we've rarely made it a special point to press for contributions. Instead, we've operated on the premise that this publication should be able to fund itself without the need for frequent appeals or other high-pressure tactics. We don't intend to change this, but we *have* decided to begin a fund raising appeal in order to more quickly obtain a needed piece of equipment, a computer laser printer. For those who have a special interest in seeing this publication thrive (rather than just survive), we ask that you contribute now to this fund in order that we can obtain a laser printer & necessary fonts. Heretofore we've depended entirely upon the use of a printer owned by one of our staff. However, this has led to a bottleneck in production which has impeded our efforts. Our goal is \$2,000 in contributions by June 1, 1992. Would you like to help us attain this goal? Each contributor of \$50 or more will receive a certificate suitable for framing in thanks for her/his contribution to the downfall of civilization!

### Omission

In our last issue we unintentionally left off attribution for the column titled "The anti-anarchist conspiracy: An empirical test". Although we attributed it to its author, Bob Black, in the contents listing on page 2,

somehow we missed printing his byline with the article itself. Sorry Bob!

### Foreign periodicals

Once again we have many foreign-language periodicals available to anyone who wants to send the postage necessary to receive them. Especially numerous at the present time are Italian and Greek-language anarchist periodicals. Check out our "Anarchist press review" listings in this and recent issues to get an idea of the titles that are probably available at this time. Just send cash, a check or money order for \$3 or less to cover postage.

### Thanks for your support!

Our current sustaining contributors include: B.B. of Numazu-shi, Japan; L.C., T.O., A.H., A.D. & S.H. of Columbia, MO.; A.M. of Farmingdale, N.J.; D.A. of Carbondale, IL.; A.H. of New Braunfels, TX.; A.G. of Paris, France; L.P. of Detroit, MI.; G.M. of Yellow Springs, OH.; L.A. of Chicago, IL.; P.K. of San Francisco, CA.; E.K. of Edmonton, Alberta; T.D. of Manhattan Beach, CA.; S.L. of Lewisville, TX.; D.J. of Los Angeles, CA.; J.J. of Union City, CA.; C.R. of Glenolden, PA.; R.S. of University City, MO.; K.M. of Oakland, CA.; B.K. of Canoga Park, CA.; and S.6 of Darwin, Australia. More thanks to all of you for your extra support! Without it we'd be hard pressed to continue publication in our current form. Sustaining contributors to *Anarchy* donate \$50 to \$100 per year—which includes a First Class subscription! We can *always* use more support! Any suggestions?

*Anarchy* is a not-for-profit quarterly publication of C.A.L. Press. We sell no advertising, have no paid staff, and finance this journal entirely through donations, newsstand sales and subscriptions.

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- \$9.00/six issues in the U.S. (unwrapped, 3rd Class bulk mail)
  - \$12.00(U.S.)/six issues in Canada or Mexico, & for U.S. subscribers who want to receive their subscriptions in plain envelopes (3rd Class)
  - \$15.00/six issues for our library/institutional rate
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  - \$15.00(U.S.)/six issues for other continents by Surface mail
  - \$30.00(U.S.)/six issues for other continents by Airmail
- Back issues are available postpaid for \$2.50 for the first one (in the U.S. by 1st Class mail, Surface mail to other continents), \$2.00 each for additional copies (2nd to 10th) and \$1.00 each for further copies (11th and up). Airmail orders to other continents must include \$2.50 extra for each copy ordered. Issues #1 & 2 (xeroxed copies only) & #6 to #30 (originals) are now available. Sorry, #3-5 are not in print.
- PLEASE MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO C.A.L. (WE CANNOT ACCEPT CHECKS MADE OUT TO *Anarchy*!) And keep in mind that, if your subscription is by Third-Class mail, YOU MUST SEND US CHANGE OF ADDRESS NOTICES PROMPTLY (this means at least 4 weeks before you move!) in order to be assured that you'll receive all your copies. The Post Office does not forward them! And we can't afford to freely send out a lot of extra copies.
- Please send checks or money orders in U.S. dollars only. U.S. Canadian or British paper currencies are also acceptable. (If you must make out your check in a foreign currency, add U.S.\$10.00 for conversion.) Subscribers are free to prisoners. Sustaining contributors send \$50.00 to \$100.00 per 6 issues.
- U.S. subscribers, please allow 90 days for delivery if you are subscribing at 3rd Class rates; 1st Class allow 30 days. Foreign subscribers, please allow adequate delivery time for Surface rate subscriptions (up to 3 months).

We're seeking 2nd Class postal status, and very rarely we will exchange our mailing list with other publications and projects which we trust. Please notify us when subscribing if you do not want your address used for these purposes.

### Distribution

Bulk copies for resale in North America at a cover price of \$2.50 are available at 40% discount for 6 to 19 copies; 45% discount for 20 to 59 copies; 50% discount for 60 to 99 copies; and 60% discount for 100 or more copies. Masthead returns are adequate. (An accelerated discount schedule is available for those who are willing to make whole copy returns: 50% for 40 to 59 copies, and 60% for 60 or more copies.) Bulk orders for resale outside of North America (shipped by surface mail): 20% discount for 6 to 19 copies; 40% discount for 20 to 69 copies; 45% discount for 70 or more copies. Overseas Airmail terms: please enquire.

### Submissions

Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with all articles, stories, photos, and graphic art if you wish to have them returned. Please submit two copies of all articles and fiction. We prefer that all submissions be typed and double-spaced if possible; IBM or MacIntosh diskettes are also acceptable, or if there is an interest in sending submissions by modem, first write to E.B. Funck c/o C.A.L.

Short news and comment articles or reviews which are used in "Openers," "The Sad Truth," "Alternative Media Review" or "International Anarchist News" may be edited for brevity and style. Other submissions (features, etc.) will be edited only with the author's permission. Until we can afford to remunerate authors, photographers, and graphic artists for their published contributions we will give free issues &/or subscriptions, or other appropriate tokens of our appreciation. The deadlines for submissions are Feb. 1st for the Spring issue, May 1st for the Summer issue, Aug. 1st for the Fall issue, and Nov. 1st for the Winter issue, but it *always* helps to get submissions in earlier!

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"The whirligig of time has its revenges."

—B.A.G. Fuller

# Winnie Mandela, queerbashing, and the Left

Several months ago a trial took place in South Africa that might have been expected to be of great interest to the progressive lesbian/gay movement. Winnie Mandela was convicted of various charges connected with the kidnapping and beating of several young men, one of whom was later killed by one of her associates. What makes this trial relevant to gay/lesbian movements is that at least part of the reason for the attack was that these men were believed to be having sex with other men, an activity that Mandela apparently finds worthy of punishment by beatings, even death. Over two years ago, when this incident occurred, Mandela was severely criticized by anti-apartheid activists in South Africa. However, with the notable exception of the article, "Has Winnie lost it?" in the May 1991 *BLK*, we have yet to see much criticism of Mandela by progressive lesbian/gay activists or publications in the United States. A number of local lesbians even participated in the organization of a women's event in Boston in her honor last June. Apparently many radical lesbians and gay men feel that queerbashing is okay, as long as it's perpetrated by other progressives like Mandela.

We concede that it is hard to know all the facts about what happened in this incident, but we have read nothing which leads us to doubt that anti-homosexual bias played an important role in the beatings and murder. Mandela herself admits that the presumed homosexual contact between her victims and a minister at a hostel in which they lived was the motivation for their abduction and beating. She claims,

however that she was only trying to 'protect' them from "sexual abuse," despite the fact the 'victims' have never claimed any abuse occurred. Like many parents who try to beat homosexual feelings out of their children, Mandela feels it is legitimate to torture those who prefer homosexual sex. If she were truly interested in protecting these men against alleged sexual abuse, why not deal with the supposed 'abuser', instead of further abusing the 'victims'. The only abuse suffered by these young men was that inflicted by Mandela and her friends.

Such actions on the part of Mandela against her opponents should come as no surprise given her commitment to violence and bloodshed as the preferred method of dealing with problems. Mandela has been tied to three other kidnappings and assaults, as well as a disappearance, that took place within a few months of the events she was being tried for. She has also been quoted as saying, "With our matches and our necklaces, we will liberate South Africa," referring to the practice of placing gasoline-soaked tires around the necks of those some anti-apartheid activists consider 'traitors', and lighting them on fire. Interestingly, just like Mandela's bullying of young queers, necklacing is used only against black people.

Unlike most of their counterparts in the United States, the progressive movement in South Africa refused to keep silent in the face of Mandela's brutality. In fact, the first reports of the assaults and killing were published by an anti-apartheid newspaper, not the press

controlled by or supportive of the government. Anti-apartheid organizations in South Africa, such as the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the United Democratic Front (UDF), were quick to condemn such violence on the part of Mandela. The UDF/COSATU statement read, in part,

"We are outraged at Mrs. Mandela's obvious complicity in the recent abductions and assault of Stompie....We are outraged by the reign of terror that the team [Mandela's body guards, also known as the Mandela United Soccer Club or the Mandela Football Club] has been associated with. Not only is Mrs. Mandela associated with the team, in fact, the team is her own creation. We are of the view that Mrs. Mandela has abused the trust and confidence which she has enjoyed over the years.... The Mass Democratic Movement hereby distances itself from Mrs. Mandela and her actions."

This rebuke from her former allies in the anti-apartheid movement came only five months after another challenge to her image as a well-liked opposition leader. In September 1988, Mandela's home in Soweto was burned down by local 'comrades', apparently in retaliation for a sexual assault against a student leader by members of the "football club." (Apparently, real sexual abuse is acceptable to Mandela and her friends, as long as it is heterosexual.) The attack on Mandela's home appears to have been promoted as well by ill-feeling generated by Mandela's rather comfortable lifestyle, which includes ownership of a Mercedes, in the midst of the widespread poverty in Soweto. According to a source in the anti-apartheid labor movement, the public condemnation of Mandela by COSATU and UDF was prompted by pressure on the part of Soweto residents fed up with the activities of Mandela and her associates. Prior to the killing of Stompie Seipei, opposition among other anti-apartheid activists to Mandela's thugs had led both Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela to call on her to disband the club.

The left in the United States, hetero or homo, has never been very principled in its defense of individuals against the tyranny of progressive governments or movements. For

instance, some gay/lesbian activists still defend the Cuban politicians who imprisoned queers in the past and quarantine HIV-positive people today, practices these activists would find intolerable if engaged in by the United States government or its allies. Apparently, for many leftists, political leaders like Mandela and Castro who mouth the slogans of liberation do not need to live up to the same standards of behavior as mere mortals. In a column entitled "Leftist cheerleaders are often wrong, but never in doubt," Thomas Sowell discussed the mindset of Mandela's supporters:

"Long before the present ugly episode, Winnie Mandela was justifying the hideous practice of burning political enemies alive. How could anyone have romanticized such a person? Like too many issues, South Africa is not approached as a serious question about the fate of millions of flesh-and-blood human beings, but as a symbolic issue providing yet another backdrop for our own moral preening. Those who are preoccupied with showing that they are on the side of the angels are quick to find angels to side with. Winnie Mandela was just one of those angels."

Just as many American leftists once ignored credible evidence that progressive leaders like Lenin and Castro were brutalizing and killing dissidents, most leftists today, including many lesbian/gay activists, continue to fawn over Mandela, despite the fact that even many of her former allies have seen her for the bully she is and have spoken out against her. People who are serious about liberation, sexual and otherwise, need to have a consistent commitment to personal freedom and be willing to speak out whenever people are unjustly attacked, whoever the attacker may be. Hypocritically covering-up and apologizing for the excesses of progressives puts into serious doubt the left's stated commitment to a free society.

-Boston Anarchist Drinking Brigade [BAD Brigade] (POB 1323, Cambridge, MA 02238).

A slightly different version of this broadside appeared in *Gay Community News*, July 7-13, '91.

## Uncommon Ground: Fear and Hierarchy in Boulder

After hearing so much about SEAC [the Student Environmental Action Coalition] pulling thousands of students to each of its first two conferences, reading their well done *Threshold*, and laughing at the fear in *Forbes* eyes when it denounced SEAC as "corporation bashers," I went to SEAC's "Common Ground" gathering believing it to be a student conference. Instead all around me was a hierarchical, inaccessible, costly, and undemocratic press conference dominated by a day and a half of speeches that had little to do with students and less with the universities.

A few days before leaving for Boulder, two friends threw unsubstantiated claims of hierarchy in SEAC at me. I could see hierarchy in the structure of SEAC, top heavy with a coordinating council and national office, but I figured this group was worth the effort because of all the great work they'd done in so little time. Besides, what group isn't plagued with problems of hierarchy and centralization?

Yet, from the moment I entered the conference center, I was agitated by innumerable problems. Everyone at the conference wore either a green or yellow SEAC shirt. As you could easily guess, the greens were the peons, who could answer no question without permission by the yellows, who could be seen running around, walkie talkie in hand, barking out orders to the greens without the slightest 'please', 'would you', or 'thanks' that I could hear.

As hundreds crowded behind police barricades (no joke!) in the entrance, more directions were barked out to us. We were made to stand in two lines after filling out our registration form in order to receive our packet. As registration began, a woman demanded that we "don't push and shove," as if expecting hundreds of environmentalists to tear at each other to get in first.

The paperwork was slight even if the amount of paper a grotesque waste. The registration form took up a full 8 by 11.5 inch-

es, when it could easily have fit three per sheet. We were each given a colored notebook made by Mead—a major toxic polluter! Inside, we had a twenty one page slickly done 8 by 11.5 inch program done on recycled paper that was laid out with so much extra unused space and large fonts that with some effort, it could have been cut in length by maybe 50%, thus saving a lot of paper and ink. While nicely done, it was not thought out with the same concern that brought us to Boulder.

It gets worse. Considering that it cost me \$130 for roundtrip food and travel to reach the conference (not counting the free floor I was kindly given by a friend), I was also expected to pay another \$25 for conference admissions, \$15 if I wanted to join SEAC, \$5 if I wanted to camp, and \$5 for parking. Is it any wonder why poor students and students of color don't attend—we can't afford to! While I couldn't make Randy Viscio's "Poor Students' Caucus" on Saturday, I couldn't imagine much of a turnout. There couldn't have been many of us, although there certainly would be more by the time we returned home. And if you couldn't afford the cover charge, there was always the unpaid labor of 'volunteering' (isn't this how the poverty draft works?). I was expected to work six hours for my entrance and a t-shirt, which I bet no one who could afford cover volunteered to do. It was clear that I was a second class citizen, since the volunteer desk worker told me she didn't need my registration form, so I was never formally in attendance. To put it bluntly, Common Ground was a private club for activists with the cash.

Of course, sneaking in had been well planned for (as if there was much reason to). We were required to wear name badges to enter and checked at an internal checkpoint. One volunteer even asked us for our badge on Sunday afternoon. Not only were those who couldn't afford to pay the cover turned away or made to work their way through, but even those who wanted to attend so badly they'd sneak in, were prevented from doing so. And if anyone did make it through, no doubt the

armed cops patrolling inside would be there to crack a few heads—which would be just what some folks would love to see happen to us.

Assuming you could afford all the cover charges, the accommodations were quite shocking. We were meeting in a conference center named after and owned by Coors, whom SEAC is organizing against. Ironically, Coors is a major financial backer of the Madison Center, which bankrolls the right wing student group who was holding a conference at the very same time on the very same campus. I was also quite astonished by the opportunity to camp in a fenced grass lot behind the center with twenty four hour guards who harassed people for peeing in the grass. And you thought this was an environmentalist conference! The sign at the camping registration table listed the rules: no smoking, no drinking, etc. and "Undercover cops. Just a joke. Really." You could have fooled me. The people who stayed there became their own cops. There was no music, no carousing, no nothing. It was dead. And if you didn't have your parking pass, you were threatened with a ticket. There was no shortage of disincentives for attending. In fact, two people from our region went home Saturday by bus (in addition to growing to despise our then regional coordinator and national rep in only two days).

When we approached Beth Ising and conference organizer Jeanette Galanis Saturday afternoon with a complaint, we mentioned but just one problem: being a national student conference, we students were never given any opportunity to talk to each other in a conference wide meeting with open mikes. While Jeanette came to see our point, Beth never could. Considering the fact that the conference has the words 'National' and 'Student' in them one could assume that it would, 1) have something to do with students and thus, the universities, colleges and high schools we attend and 2) allow us to talk to each other. I was mistaken. Unlike the 1988 National Student Convention, 1989 Progressive Student Network Conference, and the 1991 D.C. Student and Youth Conference Against the Gulf War, there were no opportunities for us to hear each other speak about our struggles, feelings, and experiences. Beth suggested the rally was the place. Yet that turned out to be far from the center of the activity and less than an hour of open mike time for which few on the sign up list of only about thirty people at the start got

## Audio Information

Compiled by Toni Otter

The following sources of cassette tape contain information and views often suppressed, distorted, or ignored in the mainstream media. A request for a tape list from groups mentioned below should result in a response. I've probably omitted someone doing significant audio, so please write our "Letters" section and share your favorite audio sources with other *Anarchy* readers.

Caution: information presented in these tapes may lack anarchic perspectives and analyses. As always, use what you hear with critical discretion.

**Alternative Radio**, 1814 Spruce, Boulder CO 80302. (David Barsamian interviews)

**Archives on Audio** (by Dave Emory) P.O. Box 170023, San Francisco, CA 94117-0023. (415) 346-1840

**Coyote Radio**, P.O. Box 1635, Goleta, CA 93117.

**Great Atlantic Radio Conspiracy**, 2748 Maryland Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218. (301) 243-6987

**Prevailing Winds Research**, P.O. Box 23511, Santa Barbara, CA 93121. (805) 566-8016

**The Other Americas**, P.O. Box 85, Santa Barbara, CA 93102. (805) 569-5381

to speak. Instead we were blessed with a rant from a CNN executive who was introduced to speak about press coverage and spent 90% of her time trashing the previous speaker (who came all the way from New Zealand) and proceeded to tell us why UnSED really isn't all that bad.

Rather than being allowed to speak to each other about what we are doing at home—which I naively expected to be a major part of the

Continued at right



## Native Americans intensify protests Anti-Columbus Day

**P**rotesting the 499th anniversary of Columbus' 'discovery' of America, indigenous groups sponsored events, carried out actions and laid plans for activities to counter the big bash—the celebration of the 500th anniversary—which will take place in October, 1992.

Carrying signs denouncing "500 years of genocide," Mapuche natives held a march in downtown Santiago, Chile, and demanded that land taken from their ancestors be returned. A molotov cocktail, which burned a 15 year-old youth, was hurled at the demonstrators by a man who objected to the demonstration. In Lautara, a city in the far south of the country, eleven protestors were arrested for obstructing the police during an occupation, and in Tanuco, a university was occupied by students of Arauco origin.

In Bolivia, where the day marking Columbus' arrival has become the object of annual protests, a day of mourning was declared and a number of demonstrations took place. Bolivia has the highest proportion, 67%, of indigenous people in Latin America. Security was stepped up to prevent possible actions by the Ejército Guerrillero Tupaj Katari, a native guerrilla group which has been active in the capital, La Paz.

In Lima, Peru, a demonstration took place, and another was held in front of Columbus' statue in Mexico City.



Rigoberta Menchú (left) and María Elena Pérez García at a recent press conference.

**Uncommon Ground** *Continued from left* conference—we were given a day and a half of speakers. Most of whom, while all very interesting, spoke at us from hundreds of yards away on huge platforms usually about how students could serve this or that movement but rarely ever about how we can organize and strategize our own. Not to mention, few of them were even students, and of those few, most were SEAC veterans and national office folks who ironically cheered about building a student movement to the die hard 200 who roughed it through hours of long speeches on plastic folding stadium seats. Somehow, as if expecting us to be bored, they even scheduled a session of the "hokey pokey" in an attempt to amuse us.

Granted, there were opportunities to talk in our workshops and regional workshops and meetings. But we only had 3 hours and 15 minutes to attend two of literally hundreds of terrific sounding workshops. Those didn't even start until after a day and a half of speeches. And the regional workshops were given only one hour on Sunday morning to cram in four topics and one hour and fifteen minutes for the regional meeting, the most important activity for our region considering our urgent need to replace our regional coordinator. With the regional workshops so short, there would be little chance to learn about what others are doing, as Beth claimed. Worst of all, the regional meeting was scheduled for 11:45, right at the time a lot of people would have to leave to make it to class the next day if it took a day or more to drive home.

Of course going to Common Ground was invaluable to me in many ways. I got to meet some great people from Texas I would have otherwise never had met. I also made good

In Guatemala, 275 representatives of native groups from most countries in the Americas met to exchange information, coordinate activities and plan the "500 Years Campaign" protests. Risking a violent reception from the far from dormant death squads, Rigoberta Menchú, the author of a well-known autobiography whose parents and brother were assassinated by the Guatemalan military, returned from exile to attend the conference.

In Brazil, an open letter was addressed to the Pope, whose visit coincided with the 499th anniversary. "The indigenous people of Brazil are against the festive commemorations," the letter stated, "because during these centuries we have suffered a process of extermination." In response, the Pope railed about those "who have tried to denigrate the history of evangelization in Brazil through a distorted vision that is more ideological and political than religious," and ranted, "I kneel before each of these missionaries," who, he acknowledged, may have possessed a number of "weaknesses and defects." (!)

In other countries, reactions to the protests echoed the Pope's hostile response. Sergio Jarpa, a right-wing Chilean senator, denounced the "aggressive outlook" of the Mapuches, accusing them of being 'manipulated' by socialists and communists. Meanwhile, Enrique Krauss, the Minister of Labor of the ruling center-left coalition, called the protests "absolutely reprehensible," and attempted to give the impression that everything would be peachy once a few constitutional reforms were implemented. Similar claims in Nicaragua, one notes, did not induce indigenous people to vote for the Sandinistas in the last elections—hardly a surprise considering the repression they experienced from the Sandinistas, including the imprisoning of native representatives and forced relocations to "model villages" of the kind put into practice by the CIA and American military in Vietnam. Ideologically blinkered by its hysterical obsession with the Sandinistas, the Reagan administration lacked the lucidity to appreciate what would have otherwise been applauded: the Sandinistas' admirable ability to enforce labor discipline, crack the whip and implement IMF/World Bank-type austerity programs for national and international capital.

In other reactions to the protests, a right-wing Guatemalan newspaper editorialist (referring to Rigoberta Menchú and others at the international conference) objected to the

friends who are fighting some great struggles, such as the women at Texas A&M Galveston who have literally stopped the Mitsubishi owned copper plant dead in its tracks. We also got to elect a new regional coordinator who will actually keep the information flowing and complement our diverse political needs. Yet, this came in spite of Common Ground, not because of it.

The conference itself never spoke to our diverse needs but attempted to herd us through what was no more than a glorified press conference with us its captive crowd in a photo opportunity. Not only were the universities role as profit making businesses, toxic polluters, and military arsenals never addressed, but neither were the needs of poor students, students of color (whose caucus was scheduled to meet after the Friday speeches—which ended nearly at midnight), and women, whose caucus was dumped at 8AM on Sunday morning. If the minuscule attendance of people of color at this conference is any sign of the future, next year there just may also be no poor or women students there.

I am enchanted by the efforts of the many who worked so hard to make this happen. Without SEAC, I would still never know my neighbors at Southwestern who live a mere twenty minutes away. SEAC has to be more about getting all the little struggles together to form many movements, otherwise it's going to be stillborn. We aren't flooding to SEAC conferences for the big money budgets (I still wonder where it all goes), the endless speeches and press coverage (although it surely helps). We are coming to change the way we live together now. We just may end up having to change SEAC just as much.

—Robert Ovetz



Indigenous people with Zapata poster protest in front of Columbus' statue in Mexico City.

presence of "unnecessary leftist connotations" which he claimed had 'contaminated' the conference, and accused Menchú of supporting the guerrillas. In a country like Guatemala an accusation of being involved with the guerrillas is the equivalent of a death sentence. In a recent trip to the United States, Guatemalan President Jorge Serrano Elías also accused the Runujel Junam Council of Ethnic Communities of involvement with the guerrillas, which they denied, stating that Serrano's comment was yet another proof that "In Guatemala freedom of speech, and to organize, do not exist."

Although Rigoberta Menchú does in effect support the guerrillas, many native people in Guatemala are very wary of the guerrilla groups, understandably seeing them as one faction in a struggle for power between competing ladino (i.e. non-native) elites which have never paid more than obligatory lip service to native concerns. As a result of the electoral defeat of the Sandinistas, and the inability of the FMLN and URNG in El Salvador and Guatemala respectively to mount a serious threat to topple their governments, these organizations are presently in a state of crisis. In line with a global drift to the right, they are rapidly shedding any pretensions of desiring radical change, as social democracy becomes the dominant feature of the unsavory triad—Marxism-Leninism/left-Christianity/social democracy—which characterizes them.

Despite their dubious record, self-proclaimed vanguards such as the Sandinistas or the URNG in Guatemala continue to paternalistically portray themselves as defenders of the dispossessed, and of indigenous people in particular. One leftist intellectual, for example, who spent time with the Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres, a Guatemalan guerrilla group, states that, "For me, the convergence of Marxism-Leninism and the lifeways of native peoples is not a question of chance. Marxism-Leninism always uses social reality as a starting point, which, in this case, is a question of a people of primarily indigenous and peasant origin." ("Guatemala, Escuela Revolucionaria

de nuevos Hombres; Con el Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres, 1981-82," editorial *Nuestro Tiempo*) But this is simply self-serving demagoguery. Leninism of the pure variety is a dying breed in Latin America, where only naked coercion sustains Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), the one Leninist group which presents a real threat to topple a government. Seeing anyone who objects to their hegemony as a rival vanguard, Sendero has set out to physically eliminate the competition, mowing down priests, indigenous people, members of Túpac Amará (a Castroist guerrilla group), etc. From the left, right and center, native people have received little more than abuse.

Meanwhile, six years after the arrival of 'democracy', the military continues to call the shots in the primarily indigenous Guatemalan highlands. Lately the army has taken to lobbing shells at native villages, as in the recent bombardment of Ixcán and Tzija, raising fears that the horrors of the scorched earth policy of the early '80s, when hundreds of villages were razed and thousands killed, might be starting all over again.

—Michael William

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## ALTERNATIVE MEDIA REVIEW

As always, we are happy to exchange publications with other "alternative" periodical publishers. I try to list all the publications we receive in a timely way, but please be aware that there are times when this is impossible due to time and space limitations. Also keep in mind that the *Anarchy* issue we send for exchanges will be the one your publication is reviewed in, so please be patient. With this issue I've had to begin restricting reviews a bit due to the huge amount of space they've begun to take in these pages. Those periodicals not reviewed will still be briefly listed at the end of this section. -Lev

**WORLD WAR 3 ILLUSTRATED** #15/undated (POB 20271, Tompkins Square Station, New York, NY. 10009) is a 100-page magazine of political comics & graphic art. This issue, with a haunting cover by Sabrina Jones, focuses on recent evictions of squatters and homeless in New York and Hamburg. Eric Kuper contributes an urban artist's fantasy titled "The Jungle," along with Eric Drooker's tribute to murdered Lower East Side artist Grady Alexis, Seth Tobocman's graphic story of the "Memorial Day provocation" which led to the closing of Tompkins Square Park, an account of "The Flora Park eviction" in Hamburg, and more. Check it out! Copies are \$4/postpaid.

**PRISON NEWS SERVICE/THE MARIONETTE** #31[55]/July-Aug. & #32[56]/Sept.-Oct.'91 (POB 5052, Stn. A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5W 1W4) is a very informative, combined 12-page tabloid covering North American prison issues. Issue #31 includes Mumia Abu-Jamal's "May 13th remembered" (on the police massacre of MOVE members in Philadelphia in 1985), Zoltan Lugosi's "AIDS in Canadian prisons: Some policies can not wait," and a "Letter—Michael Stotts responds to criticisms" (concerning Larry Giddings' article in the previous issue). Issue #32 includes "Manitoba's aboriginal justice inquiry condemns racism in the justice system" by Jim Campbell, stories commemorating the Attica prison rebellion of 1971 and the 1970 police murder of Jonathan Jackson, as well as further commentary on the Michael Stotts/Larry Giddings exchange, this time by Bill Dunne. Send a contribution for a sample copy; or the suggested subscription rate is \$10/year (6 issues).

**EARTH FIRST!** Vol.11,#8/Mabon & Vol.12,#1/Samhain '91 (POB 5176, Missoula, MT. 59806) is a 40-page tabloid of the Earth First! movement /organization (now freed from the major editorial manipulations of the old Tucson-based collective which has resigned). Issue #8 starts out with a cover story on the "Shawnee Showdown" (detailing the defeat of longstanding efforts to stop the Fairview Timber slaughter) by Orin Langel, and continues with an interesting courtroom post-mortem titled "Arizona conspiracy trial ends in plea bargain" by Karen Pickett (along with another piece by Pickett titled "A snitch on the stand"), "High thoughts on Walbran Valley" (on attempts to stop the clear-cutting of old growth on Vancouver Island) by Freebird, an anonymous piece on "Animal liberation vs? radical environmentalists," "Carnageddon" by Jason Torrance, and Jack Turner on "The abstract wild." Issue #1 includes a statement titled "Wake up!" from recently sentenced Marc Davis, accounts like Greg Gordon's "Huanorani fight oil companies" (in Ecuador) and Jan Kraker's "Razende Rooiers: The Raging Diggers" (on Dutch biotech sabotage), along with Robert Marten's witty hunt-saboteur piece titled "A hunting we will go." Recommended. Subscriptions are \$20/year (8 issues).

**RAIN** Vol.14,#1/Winter-Spring '91 (POB 30097, Eugene, OR. 97403-1097) is back after a long absence as a much improved, 48-page quarterly magazine of "Decentralized Politics." This issue includes an interesting unattributed essay extolling "The Lao alternative" (according to the author the "rejection of any kind of centralized, modern Nation State is a hallmark of the region"), a good piece on "Medieval movements & the origin of Switzerland," and an account of one example of Christopher Alexander's participatory architectural program in "The Oregon Experiment after twenty years." Worth checking out. Subscriptions are \$20/year (4 issues).

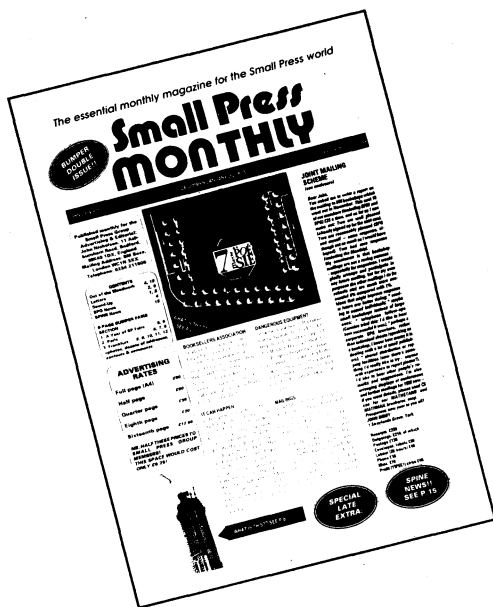
## ALSO RECEIVED:

**The Other Israel** #48/Aug.-Sept. & #49/Oct.-Nov.'91 (I.C.I.P.P., POB 956, Tel-Aviv 61008, Israel) is the 12-page newsletter of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace. Each issue includes accounts of recent events in the Middle East, Israel and its occupied territories from the perspective of the Israeli peace movement. Issue #48 features Adam Keller's analysis of Israeli Prime Minister Shamir's obstructionist strategy in dealing with the "Middle East Peace Conference," and Beate Silversmidt's heartrending account of "Gaza: a tax upon living." Definitely recommended for anyone interested in Israeli-Palestinian issues. Subscriptions are \$30/year (6 issues).

**ApaEros** #36/July '91 (John & Kathe Burt, 960 SW Jefferson Ave., Corvallis, OR. 97333) is an entertaining, 32-page "unedited reader-written forum about sex, erotica and relationships of all kinds: het, lesbian, gay, bi." Issue #36 includes Coto's "Alotta Erotica (part one)," and "Henry Gets Caught" by Frank Hart. Subscriptions are \$2/issue, but you must also send an age statement (that you are over 18).

**The Stake** #1/1991 (Ill Publishing, POB 170363, San Francisco, CA. 94117-0363) is a new 36-page fiction zine with a brightly colored cover. This premier issue, subtitled "Humor/Horror For a Dying Planet," features Mark Ivanhoe's "Slim Jim and His Growth" (the story's better than the title), "The Crow Story" by Maxine, the first part of J.G. Eccarius' new story, "The Skull," and Anne Marie's "How to be the Ideal East Village Girlfriend" (reprinted from **THRUSH**). Subscriptions are \$12/4 issues; single copies are \$3.95.

**EIDOS** Vol.6,#1/undated (POB 96, Boston, MA. 02137) is a 60-page (about half ads) tabloid, subtitled "Sexual Freedom & Erotic Entertainment," published by the outspoken Brenda Tatelman who states that "Eidos advocates erotic justice and sexual equality for traditionally persecuted and oppressed sexual minorities" (although it is self-proclaimedly "Not a gay or lesbian publication"). This issue starts off with a cover proclaiming "Sexually Free & Proud!!" at the top and "Radical Sex Anarchy Now!" at the bottom, and includes Roland Van Liew on "Fronatist zealotry & reproductive rights: How Catholics seized control of US family planning programs," Peter Cummings' reminiscence of a first encounter with childhood group sex titled "Primal Time," Lita Blick's "New experiences," and Catherine Travel's "Stranger in a strange land: Sexworker at the 1991 NOW Conference." This is one of the more open, and seemingly libertarian of the sex/porn/erotica periodicals that I've seen. Many people will find this worth checking out. One of the best aspects of the magazine is that it's letters policy is similar to ours here at *Anarchy*, leading to a lot of informal, unedited dialogue. Sample copies are \$10; subscriptions are \$40/year (4 issues).



**Small Press Review** #224/Sept., #225/Oct. & #336/Nov.'91 (POB 100, Paradise, CA. 95967) is a 16-page publication which concentrates on reviewing new small press poetry and fiction. Issue #224 features John Huenefeld's "Guest editorial: A declaration of war against distribution discrimination," as well as a reprint of Bob Black's (now somewhat dated, but on target) review of Mike Gunderloy's **Factsheet Five**. Issue #225 features Jack Saunders' editorial titled "Blow-off artist." And issue #226 includes Richard Evanoff's "10 ways to promote yourself: Without using junk mail." Subscriptions are \$20/year (12 issues).

**The Village Idiot** #14/Sept.-Dec.'91 (POB 66, Harrison, ID. 83833-0066) is a nicely-produced 48-page literary journal. This issue features lots of fair to interesting short fiction like Carole Bellacera's intimate "The Retreat," Jim Reagan's "The Wild West," Mark Kevlock's semi-philosophical rant "Me vs. Everyone," and Cindy Rosmus' not very cheerful "Holiday Cheer," interspersed with middling poetry. Sample copies \$3; subscriptions are \$7.50/3 issues.

**Artpaper** Vol.11,#2/Oct. & #3/Nov.'91 (2402 University Ave. W. #206, St. Paul, MN. 55114), subtitled "Art/Community/Cultural Activism," is a 28-page tabloid covering the arts scene and more from an occasionally radical perspective. Issue #2 includes a critical piece on new Minnesota suburban architecture by Adelheid Fischer titled "Street of dreams," and "Networking the decentralized assault" by The Aggressive School of Cultural Workers. Issue #3 includes Martha Roth on "Traveling as image" (on being a Jewish visitor to Poland). Subscriptions are \$20/year (10 issues).

**Utne Reader** #48/Nov.-Dec.'91 (Box 1974, Marion, OH. 43305) continues to use the misleading subtitle, "The best of the alternative press," though in practice this liberal version of **Readers' Digest** only reprints the more unchallenging and mainstream side of the "alternative press." Issue #48 includes a section titled "Perspectives: Eight views on adoption," Jerry Mander's common sensical "What you don't know about Indians: Native American issues are not history," Robert Warrior's "Columbus quincentennial is nothing to celebrate: But 500 years of native people's resistance is," a bunch of superficial stories on U.S. mainstream & liberal/left politics, and Laurie Ouellette's "Notes from the underground: 'Zines' (which at long last acknowledges that there is a whole world of alternative publishing heretofore basically ignored by Utne)." Subscriptions are \$18/year (6 issues).

**Bakunin** Vol.2,#1-2/July '91 & #3-4/undated [double issues] (POB 1853, Simi Valley, CA. 93062-1853) is a relatively new and competently published, 88 to 92-page literary journal running a few stories and graphic images along with lots of poetry in each number. Each issue carries a dedication "for the dead Russian anarchist in all of us." Double issue #1-2 features competent short fiction like Elizabeth Cook's "Prime Time," Bill Mohr's "The Drop," Mark Wisniewski's "Steaks," and Andy Roberts' "The Source of His Sorrow." Issue #3-4 is a "Special Mills College Issue," featuring works by students, alumnae and alumni, including "The Way to L.A." by Pier Roberts, and "An Afternoon's Swim" by Diane Lebeuf. Single copies are \$5; subscriptions are \$8/year.

**Left Green Notes** #9/Aug.-Sept.'91 (825 East Roosevelt #178, Lombard, IL. 60148) is the 32-page voice for the "left-green" faction of the U.S. greens. Issue #9 includes "The

ecological left in Germany: An interview with Jutta Dittfurth" by Vera Gaserow, Mark News on "Green age cooperatives," a long combined review of Michael Albert & Robin Hahnel's *Looking Forward: Participatory Economics for the 21st Century* and their *The Political Economy of Participatory Economics* by Howard Hawkins, as well as an account of the latest **Love and Rage** conference by Paul Glavin, and the minutes of the "3rd Continental Congress of the Left Green Network." Subscriptions are \$10/year (6 issues).

**off our backs** Vol.21,#9/Oct., #10/Nov. & #11/Dec.'91 (2423 18th St. NW, Washington, DC. 20009) is a 24-page tabloid with probably the best feminist news coverage of any North American publication. Issue #9 has a cover story titled "Death stops the parade: Two women protest the US war machine," and a review of Helen Collinson's *Women and Revolution in Nicaragua* titled "Nicaragua: Warts and all" by Pam Keesey. Issue #10 includes a piece on Maxine Wolfe and "Women in AIDS activism," and a review of Janet Biehl's *Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics* by Carol Douglas. Issue #11 includes a couple interesting pieces on "Nicaragua's lesbian and gay movement" (an interview) & "Struggling for justice in Nepal" (on Shanti Choudhary's women's center), along with Carol Douglas' review of Sheila Jeffreys' *Anti-climax: A Feminist Perspective on the Sexual Revolution* (an attack on 'sexologists' & sexual 'libertarians'—notable quote from Jeffreys: "Heterosexual desire is eroticized power difference."). Subscriptions are \$19/year (11 issues).

**Lookout!** #36/Winter '92 (POB 11374, Berkeley, CA. 94701) is a literate and highly readable 32-page punkzine published by Lawrence Livermore. This issue includes Livermore's "The science of myth: The myth of science," and the final installment of "Professor Livermore's economics made simple," along with lots of breezy local (Berkeley & "Emerald Triangle") commentary, along with a few anomalous plugs for electing 'better' politicians (while we're at it, why not make some 'better' scum into billionaires, too!). I've said it before, but it's still true: this is one zine that's never dull, always a good read. Subscriptions are still \$1/issue.

## OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

**Dreamtime Village** unnumbered/Summer '91 (xexoxial endarchy, 1341 Williamson, Madison, WI.53703) is an 8-page newsletter documenting the "embryonic beginnings of a permaculture hypermedia village in southwest Wisconsin" on donated land, complete with a big old school building, fire truck & bookmobile! The founders are looking for more warm bodies to populate the place. Send an SASE for a copy.



**Reclaiming Newsletter** #44/Fall '91 (POB 14404, San Francisco, CA. 94114) is a 36-page pagan newsletter "working to unify spirit and politics." This issue includes an uneasy account of M. NightMare's "Reflections on the Ball Dance: Sunday, 2 June '91," "The ordination of Sabrina (on Confessions of a high priestess)" by Z. Budapest, Bert Provost's "Discovering queer archetypes," and an interesting piece on Hawaii titled "The goddess and the politics of energy" by Kevin. Subscriptions are \$6-\$25/year (4 issues).

**Across the Lines** Unnumbered/Summer '91 (2440 16th St., Box 241, S.F., CA. 94103) is now the 8-page tabloid of Seeds of Peace, a non-violent direct-action group. This issue includes "Zero Discharge Alliance to Save the Great Lakes: No time to waste!" and "What victory?" (on the US war against Iraq). Send a donation for a sample.

**The Weekly Alternative News Monitor** #15/Sept.23, #16/Sept.30, & #18/Oct.14,'91 (Box 587, Olean, NY. 14760) is an ambitious, 4 to 8-page photocopied alternative news tabloid made up of reprints from a wide variety of sometimes illuminating, sometimes overly slanted, sources without any apparent unifying perspective. Cover price 30¢; subscriptions are \$2/month (4 issues).

**Mirkwood** #6/Sept.'91 (POB 4083, Terre Haute, IN. 47804) is an 8-page newsletter for alternative press publishers. Editor Joe Lane also writes a related **Factsheet Five** column called "The Fishing Hole." This issue focusses entirely on reactions of publishers & editors to Mike Gunderloy's recent sale of **Factsheet Five**. Cover price is \$2.

**Pagans for Peace** #50/Oct. (mislabelled #49/July) & #51/Nov. 9991 A.D.A. (POB 86134, North Vancouver, B.C. V7L 4J5, Canada) is a 12-page newsletter for socially-activist pagans. Issue #50 includes a critique of the New Age/feminist colonization and theft of Native American traditions by

Andy Smith titled "For all those who were Indian in a former life" (reprinted from *Woman of Power*, Winter '91), and a defense of hunting (against the condemnations of animal rightists) by Jennifer Smith titled "The sacred hunt." Issue #51 includes "Sacred fire: Rediscovering erotic mysticism" by Gary Lingen. Subscriptions are \$15/year (13 issues).

**Japan Environment Monitor** #34/May '91 (1941 Ogden Road, Wilmington, OH. 45177) is an impressive 20-page, "more or less monthly," English-language newsletter covering Japanese environmental issues and activists. This issue includes news reports like Jack Moyer's "Threatened biological diversity of coral reefs," "Nagara River news" (on the widespread protests against the building of the Nagara River Estuary Dam) by Sidney Atkins, and "Environmental textbooks for Japanese English classes," among many other reports. Subscriptions are \$35/year (2 issues).

**Blue Ryder** #20/Oct.-Nov.'91 (POB 587, Olean, NY. 14760) is a 36-page zine which consists of "excerpts from underground, small press, and micropress publications." Issue #20 includes Steve O'Keefe's accurate "There's no such thing as a free press" (reprinted from **Angry**), Franz Schurmann & Sandy Close's "Accepting the homeless as communities of alones" (**Pacific News Service**), and lots more. Subscriptions are \$10/year (6 issues).

**The Thistle** Vol.5,#6/Aug. & #7/Sept.'91 (M.I.T. W20-450, 84 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA. 02139) is a 16 to 20-page, weekly student-left tabloid. Issue #6 includes Archon Fung on "Clarence Thomas," Penny Loh's "Energy production vs. the environment" (criticizing government plans to revive the nuclear power industry), and a curious reprint of an *excerpt* (though this is never acknowledged) of "The war and the spectacle" from **Anarchy** #29) along with a confused reply to it by Grant Emison titled "Progressive organization; Political irrelevancy" (defending the lies and betrayals of social democracy as the best we can hope for!). Issue #7 includes a reprint of Heather Rhoads' "FBI harasses left activists" (from **New Liberation News Service**). No subscription price given.

**The Libertarian Mutualist** #1/Oct. & #2/Nov.'91 (POB 40391, St. Pete, FL. 33710) is a new, right-wing "libertarian" newsletter. The first issue consists of a summary of an article by Benjamin Tucker titled "State socialism and anarchism," along with a call for the "repeal of election laws which give ruling party members preferential status for ballot access." Issue #2 features Lance Klafeta's "Ayn Rand and the perversion of libertarianism." Send a "contribution" for a subscription (10 issues/yr.).

**Alternative Press Index** Vol.23,#2/April-June '91 (POB 33109, Baltimore, MD. 21218) is a 120-page quarterly, library-style index to a wide range of alternative and radical periodicals, including anarchic publications like the **Fifth Estate**, **Kick It Over, Our Generation**, and **Social Anarchism**, along with **Anarchy**. (However, the editors have refused to index **The Match!**, despite the fact that this publication has been publishing longer than most of the other anarchist publications listed and well deserves to be listed.) Subscriptions are \$30/year (4 issues) for individuals & movement groups.

**New Liberation News Service** Vol.2,#1/Sept., #2/Oct. & #3/Nov.'91 (POB 41, MT Branch, Cambridge, MA. 02139) is now a 32-page compilation of articles (largely taken from the North American radical leftist student press) intended for reprinting by member periodicals. In probably the best issue yet, Vol.2,#1 features several interesting pieces like Theresa Bergen's "PC windmills: Right-wing money on campus" (PC = "politically correct"), Scott Henson on Dinesh D'Souza & his new book *Illiberal Education*, and Heather Rhoads' "FBI ups psych warfare against activists." Issue #3 has a reprint from **Resistance** titled "Peigan Lonefighters resist dam project," along with Phil Agee's "CIA infiltration of campus groups: The NSA scandal." Packets are \$5/issue.

**Storm Warning!** #20/Sept.'91 (VVAW-AI, 4710 University Way NE., Suite 1612, Seattle, WA. 98105) is a special issue in magazine form of this anti-imperialist veterans newsletter. It spotlights 34 military resisters who refused to participate in Operation Desert Storm and have faced consequent persecution by the US gov't. in a series of posters titled "The real heroes." Subscriptions are \$10/year(?) (10 issues).

**Katúah Journal** #32/Fall '91 (POB 638, Leicester, NC. Katúah Province 28748) is an interesting, 36-page bioregional tabloid for the Katúah region of Appalachia. Issue #32 includes a critique of the idea of the climax forest titled "Climax never came" by Henry Wender, and a fascinating account of "Talking leaves: The life and influence of Sequoyah" based on an interview with Tom Underwood. Subscriptions are \$10/year (4 issues).

**WDR** #0/Autumn & #1/'91 (Larry Taylor, POB 762, Madison, WI. 533701-0762) is an 8-page humor "journal for the Amateur Political Paranoid" (**WDR = World Domination Review**). Issue #0 includes an interview with ex-CIA-head William Casey from beyond the grave, along with a review of Philip K. Dick's *Valis*. Issue #1 continues the Casey interview, along with a column titled "Ask Mr. Worst Case Scenario." Send an SASE for a sample of the current issue.

**Any Time Now** Vol.2,#2/Autumn '91 (Affinity Place, Argenta, B.C. V0G 1B0, Canada) is a small, yet very readable 12-page zine, this time including Dick Martin's unusual critique of nonviolent direct action in the name of pacifism, and Larry Gambone's entirely unconvincing defense of social democracy (for example, he argues, "capital has been losing its private aspect, becoming subject, more and more to the will of the population!"). Subscriptions are \$4/year (4 issues).

**Arm The Spirit** #8/June-July '91 (c/o Wild Seed Press, POB 57584, Jackson Stn., Hamilton, Ontario L8P 4X3, Canada) is a 4 to 8-page newsletter of an information collective "focussing on militant and revolutionary struggles." Issue #8 includes an interview with a Guatemalan guerrilla commander intent on negotiating with the government, and one with a more recalcitrant Colombian commander. Issue #9 includes communiques regarding the assassinations of German administrators Hanno Klein (by an unknown group) and Detlev Rohwedder (by the RAF). Subscriptions are \$10/10 issues (irregular).

**The Outlander** #1/Oct.'91 (POB 585, Mountlake Terrace, WA. 98043-0585) is a new 6-page prisoners' zine devoted to charity activities for sexual assault victims and to publicizing prison issues. Send a donation for a sample copy.

**The Stranger** #2/Nov.'91 (POB 31848, Seattle, WA. 98103-1848) is a relatively new and interesting 12-page "critical newsletter." This issue includes provocative pieces like "Abortion is murder. So what," and "A good example of why America is in bad shape." Sample copies are \$1.

Continued on next page



*Flow: the Psychology of Optimal Experience* by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (Harper & Row, New York, NY, 1990) 303 pp. \$19.95 hardcover/\$10.95 paperback.

Look for this buzzword in theaters near you. Psycho-pap for the '90s. No doubt the likes of Cher and Sheena Easton have long experienced the ecstasies of 'flow'. And you thought it was just money and connections that separated you from the Hollywood elite. Now you too can get it on with the scientifically proven techniques of 'flow'!

Yes, at first glance flow looks like one of those crypto-concepts the social scientists keep trying to foist off as universal, and universally harmless, like the 'neutrality' of technology. They appeal to the purely subjectivist standpoint asking hasn't the question always been one of flow? How to crank it up, how to keep it going; the old longing for perpetual motion. What else is there we're encouraged to wonder, following Baudelaire's injunction "Be Drunk!" on wine, women, whatever; just be drunk. Laid over the libidinal sphere one might be said to be not getting enough flow/nookie.

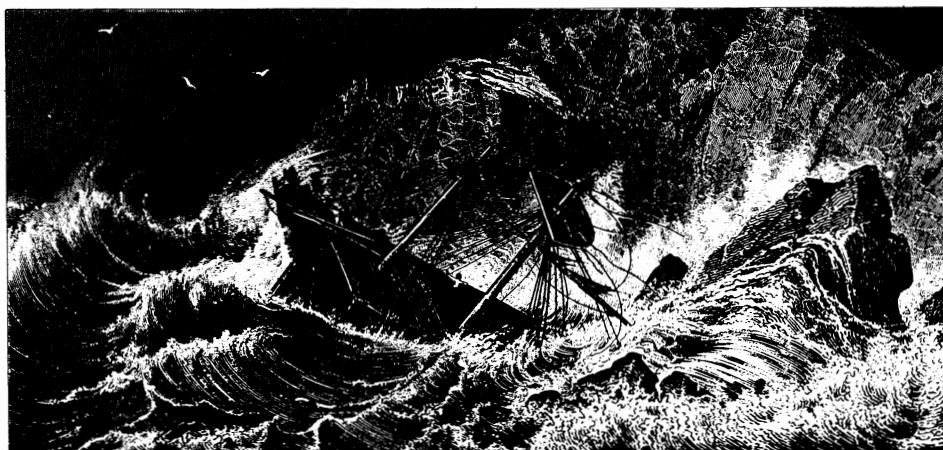
Already 'flow' has entered the mainstream, merging effortlessly with such pop psychology icons as "peak experience" and the power of "positive thinking." A recent *Health* magazine article has its author extolling the virtues of flow, particularly in the way it justifies her once guilt feelings over 'workaholicism'. Those long hours at the office have now taken on a dimension way beyond the profit motive, hey those are the best times of one's life! Bertrand Russell's *In Praise of Idleness* be damned. But what our mythical flow-ster can't fathom for the life of her is the lassitude of her slug-a-bed boyfriend, who once his eight hours of wage-slavery are up heads straight for the beach or bars. She can't turn it off that easily. Maybe the fact that she dumps him by the end of the article proves the ultimate triumph of flow: such parasitical layabouts can't keep up with one's new found dynamism. Logically the next man she meets must know the full meaning of flow and what it means to a happy relationship.

Once again such jargony sci-fi gets put to bad use, as Csikszentmihalyi, currently professor of behavioral sciences at the University of Chicago, repeatedly delivers the obvious. In a nutshell flow is the delicate balance between boredom and anxiety, hoping to match our skill with the difficulty of a task. It's the challenge of swimming out to the deep end for the very first time, and the joy of keeping your head above water. Flow is dodging the bulls at Pamplona, pulling off the impossible stock coup, or Kierkegaard puffing his after dinner cigar declaring "life is too easy, I resolve to make things difficult."

True to his sociologist's bent Csikszentmihalyi has garnered the results of investigative teams all over the world, tracking down the least instance of flow. He has surgeons & rock climbers & dock workers wearing beepers to record their exact level of flow at various intervals of the day. But it is the interviews with such traditional flow-mongers as Italian farmers and shepherds that truly reveal the fatuousness of this whole research. These are the nostalgic hold-outs, the ones we perverted

# Flow, flow, flow your boat

Review by Jay Maguesing



moderns revere in movies, books, advertising, in fact everything but reality, who've retained the secret of 'flow' that fallen society has desperately got to re-learn. This is the old anthropology ploy, seeking out the last primitive half way around the world when even the most casual look down the streets of America shows what a sorry state we're in.

Because its painfully obvious we have lost the flow, if we had any to begin with. That melodic jockeying between rote mechanics and extreme danger our alienated lifestyles repress or worse—never encourage. Maybe we achieve flow in isolated situations, shooting the rapids, playing guitar, operating on a patient; but who can imagine the sensibility of the Occitan villagers whose everyday life is so seamless they feel no separation between work and leisure. While our lives are cannibalized by the ticks of a clock, sound-bitten to death by the dogs of the media and specialization. And everywhere poly-ticians and business lemmings seek to patch up the growing disaf-

fection with *the ways things are*. Bosses who can't afford to be hard-boiled anymore are the first to grasp at the straws like flow—with the obvious blessings of the computer industry—in order to con even the minimum productivity out of their workers. It's taken for granted work with computers can engender a flow-like trance, but what they don't ask is what the hell good is that? What is the meaning of it all, why the paradox of resistance and how it takes so much effort—drugs, promises, tricks, threats—just to crawl out of bed in the morning. So that flow becomes a password, a talisman, to get up for each day at work, if only I can get into the task at hand I'll not only stave off another eight hours of boredom, but I'll be having the time of my life!

Whew, some scary thoughts. But *Flow* is full of that scientific progressivism that scolds individuals for failing to live up to their full potential. Look at such heroes as Charles Lindberg or Admiral Byrd who created their own challenges in effect, often for the express

purpose of reveling in the 'flow' of their ordeals. Concentration camp prisoners like Victor Frankl and Bruno Bettelheim didn't have such freedom, but nevertheless Csikszentmihalyi postulates a large part of their survival to injecting 'flow' into their experience. So who are we to complain? Why all the victim mentality going around nowadays when none of this compares to the oppression of certain people at certain times in history.

What can you say? Obviously this is irrefutable but I doubt it'll stop one iota of the railing against current oppression. Because Life in the *Bush of Ghosts* is our oppression and we've got a right to rail, a responsibility if you will. Csikszentmihalyi gives a glowing example of one mensch who finds his flow in shutting up and taking it. He's an older man with a grade school education who yet learns every job in the factory, from running the most elaborate equipment to fixing the cafeteria microwave. This is how he derives his flow/satisfaction in life. Then instead of blowing his hard earned money/mind at the bars, or joining the strike committee at the gate, goes home to tinker with his rock garden/sprinkler system. Well since the man often works at the factory past sundown—what a trooper—he's devised a light bank that duplicates the sun's ability to create rainbows, even in the middle of the night! Well its enough to say this is the author's idea of a true believer.

The funny thing is while Csikszentmihalyi details how the industrial revolution ruptured the idyllic lives of English weavers and Italian shepherds, still all his suggestions for introducing flow into society could as easily be adapted by the forces of domination as by regular Joes looking for a simple buzz. Apparently by his love of prison analogies he assumes this will be the case, relating gritty tales of inmates inventorying their rooms, or translating poems in their heads. Unfortunately, he extrapolates this prison mentality to so called 'free' society in which work is seen as a given—50 years hard labor—and to achieve the yearned for flow we make of things what we can. What this compassionate warden passes over is the counterflow of refusal and resistance; hey, revolution can be fun too! But show Csikszentmihalyi a world going down the toilet and, instead of blowing the damn thing up, he'd more likely say "let's play with the shit."

## Alternative press review

Continued from page 6

**Vital Information** #5/undated (POB 791377, New Orleans, LA. 70179-1377) is a small but lively, 20-page political zine, including lots of short pieces like "Beware of subliminals," Tamara Nevanohz's "How to see clearly" and "On the abolition of work(ers)." Send a "donation of paper money, or a few stamps and a used 6X9 envelope" for a sample copy.

**Industrial Worker** #1540/Oct. & #1541/Nov.'91 (1095 Market St. #204, San Francisco, CA. 94103) is the 8-page newspaper of vestigial remains of the Industrial Workers of the World. Issue #1540 features Judi Bari's concise indictment titled "Why I hate the government" (and she's got even more reason than most people!). Issue #1541 includes a pair of articles on the futility of electoralism by Jon Bekken & Jess Grant. Subscriptions are \$10/year (12 issues).

**Incite Information** Vol.2, #5/Nov.-Dec.'91 (1507 E. Franklin St. #530, Chapel Hill, NC. 27514) is a literate, if not always well-balanced, 20-page bulletin of "News Analysis and Commentary." Issue #15 includes Mili Kang's "North Korea, the next target?" (reprinted from *Covert Action Information Bulletin*), and Mickey Z's "Nixon's new America—50 years in the making." Subscriptions are \$10/year (6 issues).

**Loving More** #28/Autumn '91 (PEP, POB 6306, Captain Cook, HI. 96704-6306) is a 16-page newsletter subtitled "A group marriage journal & network." This issue includes editor Ryam Nearing on "Sexual addiction," and Mycall Sunanda's "Jealousy, trust, and agreements in group marriage." Subscriptions are \$25/year (4 issues).

**Ecol News** Vol.13, #2/July '91 (Environmental Conservation Library, Mpls. Public Library & Info. Center, 300 Nicollet Mall, Mpls., MN. 55401-1992) is a biannual, 4-page environmental newsletter, this issue devoted entirely to a well done anti-auto diatribe titled "Driving into oblivion." Free for all Minnesotans; otherwise send an SASE.

**Kids Lib News** #23/Fall '93 (POB 28, Naalehu, HI. 96772) is an intrepid, 30-page zine featuring editor Mycall Sunanda's "The last liberation movement & the most needed," an interesting "Corporal punishment factsheet" (It's appalling to see the US listed with Iran, Uganda, Canada and Australia as countries still allowing child-beating), and a "Kids' bill of rites & responsibilities for equality." Subscriptions are \$12/year (3 issues).

### LIST OF PUBLICATIONS ALSO RECEIVED:

**The American Rationalist** Vol.36, #3/Sept.-Oct. & #4/Nov.-Dec.'91 (POB 994, St. Louis, MO. 63188) 16pp. newsletter subtitled "The alternative to religious superstition," proffering rationalism in place of religion. Subscriptions are \$6/year (6 issues).

**No External Compulsion** #5/undated (215 W. 26th, Minneapolis, MN. 55404) 12pp. homopunkzine. SASE for a sample.

**Seattle Community Catalyst** Vol.2, #5/Sept., #6/Oct. & #7/Nov.'91 (5031 University Way NE, Rm.2, Seattle, WA. 98105) 16pp. eco-peace-communitytabloid. Subscriptions are \$15/year (12 issues).

**Ely Fire Fly** #10/Sept. & #11/Oct.'91 (413 N. 10th Ave. East, Ely, MN. 55731) 8pp. locally-oriented newsletter. Subscriptions are \$3.00/6 months (6 issues).

**The Nuclear Resister** #79/Sept. & #80/Oct.'91 (POB 43383, Tucson, AZ. 85733) 8pp. anti-nuclear, civil resistance tabloid. Subscriptions are \$18/year (10 issues).

**The Southern Libertarian Messenger** Vol.20, #1/May, #2/June & #3/July '91 (Rt.10 Box 52A, Florence, SC. 29501) 4 to 6pp. photocopied, right-wing "libertarian" news-clipping collection. Subscriptions are \$6/year (12 issues).

**MSRRT Newsletter** Vol.4, #8/Oct., #9/Nov. & #10/Dec.'91 (Chris Dodge/Jane DeSirey, 4645 Columbus Ave. S., Mpls, MN. 55407) 16pp. 'socially-responsible' librarians' newsletter. Send a SASE for a sample.

**Newsletter of the Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy, Inc.** #14/Summer '91 (666 Broadway, Suite 610, New York, NY. 10012) 8pp. anti-nuclear lawyers' newsletter. "Low income" subscriptions are \$20/year (? issues).

**North Star News** #7/Sept.-Oct.'91 (Box 622, Arcata, CA. 95521) 24pp. tabloid alternative/ecology news monthly covering the north coast area of California. Subscriptions are \$12/year (12 issues).

**Republican Liberty** Vol.2, #3/Summer '91 (Republican Liberty Caucus, 1717 Apalachee Parkway, Suite 434, Tallahassee, FL. 32301) 8pp. newsletter for a supposed 'libertarian' caucus in the Republican Party. Subscriptions are \$20/year (4 issues?).

**Dialogue** #89/Sept.-Oct. & #90/Nov.'91 (POB 71221, New Orleans, LA. 70172) 20pp. "Progressive Community Journal" focussing on local news, incorporating the *Delta Greens Newsletter*. Subscriptions are \$5/year (4 issues).

**The Gateway Greens' Compost-Dispatch** Vol.2, #10/Oct. & #11/Nov.'91 (Gateway Green Alliance, POB 8094, St. Louis, MO. 63156) 8pp. local/regional environmental newsletter. Subscriptions are included with membership in GGA at \$25/year (12 issues?).

**Turning The Tide** Vol.4, #5/Sept.-Oct. & #6/Nov.-Dec.'91 (POB 1990, Burbank, CA. 91507) 8pp. subtitled "L.A. Anti-Racism Newsletter." Send 50¢ for a sample copy.

**Alternative Gallery** unnumbered/July '91 (POB 20037, GR-11810 Athens, Greece) 10pp. new additions to this "Archive of Alternative/Underground/Antiauthoritarian Culture And Galactic Ecology." Send a contribution for a copy.

**Campus Review** Vol.7, #7/Sept., #8/Oct. & #9/Nov.'91 (336 S. Clinton, Suite 16, Iowa City, IA. 52240) 20 to 24pp. rabidly homophobic, generally authoritarian, right-wing student tabloid. Subscriptions are \$5/year (? issues).

**Comic Release** Vol.2, #12/Aug.26.'91 (POB 20661, Seattle, WA. 98102) 8pp. comic tabloid fortnightly. Subscriptions are \$6/6 months (12 issues).

**Methodical Fall** #18/undated (POB 80572, Mpls, MN. 55408) 4pp. free-form zine. Send an SASE for a sample.

**The Lowdown** #13/undated (POB 514, Corpus Christi, TX. 78403) 10pp. humor zine. Send an SASE for a copy.

**Subconscious Soup** #3/undated (POB 421272, Kissimmee, FL. 34742) 16pp. pro-marijuana zine. Send \$1 + two 29¢ stamps for a sample copy.

**LUNO** unnumbered/Oct. & Nov.'91 (31960 SE Chin St., Boring, OR. 97009) 10pp. newsletter of the Learning Unlimited Network of Oregon. Send an SASE for a sample copy.

**Crabby Times** unnumbered/undated (POB 571, Greenwood Lake, NY. 10925) 12pp. zine. SASE for a copy.

**The Long Beach Guts-ette** unnumbered/July & Aug.'91 (Guillotine Press, POB 2730, Long Beach, CA. 90801) 4pp. poetry zine. Send an SASE for a sample.

**Green Guts** unnumbered/Oct.'91 (POB 2730, Long Beach, CA. 90801) 4pp. poetry zine. Send an SASE.

**Mercury Rising** #1/Oct.'91 (564 Mission #152, S.F., CA. 94105) 12pp. new bike messenger zine. Send a donation for a copy.

**Community Charge** unnumbered/undated (POB 57069, Jackson Station, Hamilton, Ontario, L8P 4W9, Canada) 12pp. leftist community zine. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**It All Comes Down To Earth** unnumbered/undated (POB 1101, Knoxville, TN. 37901) 4pp. bioregionalist appeal for "evolutionary preserves." Send an SASE for a sample copy.

**Frontier Report** #7/Dec.'91 (POB 32814, Kansas City, MO. 64111) 8pp. monthly alternative community tabloid. Subscriptions are \$6/year.

**Noisy Concept** #11/Sept.-Oct.'91 (621 Bassett Rd., Bay Village, OH. 44140) 12pp. "Zine for Philosophical and Various Discussion." Sample copies are 50¢ postpaid.

**New Indicator** Vol.17, #1/Oct.2.'91 (Student Co-op Center, U.C. San Diego, B-203, La Jolla, CA. 92093) 28pp. "progressive" leftist student tabloid. Send an SASE for a sample copy.

**MIM Notes** #58/Nov. & #59/Dec.'91 (POB 3576, Ann Arbor, MI. 48106-3576) 12pp. "Official Newsletter of the Maoist Internationalist Movement," an authoritarian party speaking for "the Third World proletariat." Subscriptions are \$12/year.

**Don't Make Trouble** unnumbered/1991 (Vanity Press, 160 6th Ave., NYC, NY. 10013) 32pp. collection of Tuli Kupferberg's comics. Send \$2.00 postpaid for a copy.

**Raw/No Idea** unnumbered/undated (Nicholas Penalosa, 435 W. Delavan, Buffalo, NY. 14213) 20pp? "RAW" = "RADICAL actions against AIDS and WAR." Copies are free for SASE or trade.

**Sez Me** #4/undated (c/o John Burt, 960 SW Jefferson Ave., Corvallis, OR. 97333) 16pp. personal review zine. Send an SASE or a trade for a copy.

## Anarchy Fund Raising Drive

To this point in the evolution of this magazine we've rarely made it a special point to press for contributions. Instead, we've operated on the premise that this publication should be able to fund itself without the need for frequent appeals or other high-pressure tactics. We don't intend to change this, but we *have* decided to begin a fund raising appeal in order to more quickly obtain a needed piece of equipment, a computer laser printer. For those who have a special interest in seeing this publication thrive (rather than just survive), we ask that you contribute now to this fund in order that we can obtain a laser printer & necessary fonts. Our goal is \$2,000 in contributions by June 1, 1992. Would you like to help us attain this goal? Each contributor of \$50 or more will receive a certificate suitable for framing in thanks for her/his contribution to the downfall of civilization!

Send those dollars in now!





## Iron John

Reviewed by Toni Otter

*Iron John: A Book About Men* by Robert Bly (Addison-Wesley: New York, NY, 1990) 268 pp. \$20.00 hardcover.

I've seen positive reviews of *Iron John* in several alternative publications, including *Dumpster Times* #10 and *Reclaiming Newsletter* #43. *Pagans for Peace* #49 notes, "Iron John will become one of the basic books of the Craft." The book's dustcover mentions that a 1990 Bill Moyers' PBS special on Robert Bly, "A Gathering of Men," received massive response, and calls *Iron John* Bly's "long awaited book on male initiation."

*Iron John* is a best-selling commentary on the Grimm's tale of the same title. (The actual story "Iron John" is 10 pages long and thoughtfully printed near book's end, so if one tires of Bly's interpretation, one does have a choice.) Bly refers to his work as a "brief history of the Wild Man's place in religion, literature, and folk imagination." (p.249) According to Bly, the ravages of industrialism, and other factors, have made sensible initiation of the young by the old increasingly rare. Young people thus lack mentors, thoughtful guidance, and an understanding of the positive and negative energies within themselves. Bly suggests that traditional rites of passage are necessary for healthy human development. The "Wild Man" is a topic of much examination, and he offers that "what the psyche is asking for now is a new figure, a religious figure but a hairy one, in touch with God and sexuality, with spirit and earth." (p.249)

If Bly's book billows the sail of anyone's voyage toward man, woman, or personhood, more power to them. *Iron John* is interesting in some respects, but if I had to do it over again, I would not take time to read the book. I do not wish to discourage anyone from reading Bly's book, but I will offer my honest responses.

"The son's fear that the absent father is evil contributed to student takeovers in the sixties. Rebellious students at Columbia University took over the president's office looking for evidence of CIA involvement with the university. The students' fear that their fathers were evil was transferred to all male figures in authority. A university, like a father, looks upright and decent...but...you have the feeling that it and he are doing something demonic.... The unconscious intuitions come in, not because the father is wicked, but because the father is remote." (p.22) I ran aground at this point, and started to abandon the book but then sadly recalled I had promised to review it. Oh, well, only 246 more pages to go. "Young people go to the trouble of invading the president's office.... The country being what it is, occasionally they do find letters from the CIA, but this doesn't satisfy the deeper longing—the need of the son's body to be closer to the father's body." (p.22) It was becoming clear to me why Bly's book sells. "When the demons are so suspicious, how can the son later make any good connection with the adult male energy, especially the energy of an adult man in a position of authority or leadership? As a musician he will smash handcrafted guitars made by old men, or as a teacher suspicious

of old writers he will 'deconstruct' them.... He will go to northern California and raise marijuana...." (p.22) I personally am terrified by our young people growing *cannabis*. Perhaps they wouldn't smoke weed and smash hand-made, or factory-made, musical instruments if they were properly introduced into the grown-up world. "There's a general assumption now that every man in a position of power is...corrupt and oppressive." (p.22) Now isn't that a silly notion! Adequate male initiation just might correct such assumptions and really liberate men!

My noticing this aspect of Bly's writing is, of course, merely evidence of a poor relationship with my father. In all the talk I've heard about Robert Bly, funny that I'd never before heard: "My generation gave their King to Roosevelt, Eisenhower, General Bradley, Senator Fulbright, and other men who carried it honorably. We knew nothing of mythology around the King...but we did honor some men who... did carry order, even blessing." (p.112)

Bly's notion of history apparently differs from mine and he notes: "The United States has undergone an unmistakable decline since 1950...." (p.35) I was greatly relieved to read this since I thought our problems started in 1492, and maybe even before then. Before 1950—those were the days: World Wars I and II, the Indian Wars. A very proud legacy, but since 1950 it has been all downhill.

There is considerable talk of god, soul, and spiritual matters in Bly's work, so let those who are survivors of religion be forewarned.

Bly is a philosopher of sorts, perhaps even a Philosopher, or Burgher, King: "Two streams, then, flow down from the Sacred King. The Blessing King flows down directly into Churchill, and the Twisted King flows down directly into Stalin." (p.114) Glad to see someone still remembers the White Knight Winston Churchill. If Churchill is the 'blessing' aspect of the

"Sacred King," then regicide should soon enjoy a resurgent popularity.

Yes, I've taken some of the worst of Bly. I just thought someone might enjoy a fleeting glimpse of the Twisted King side of Robert Bly, a side that probably wasn't shown on PBS, or perhaps isn't discussed in the men's movement. I don't know whether to laugh or cry like a Wild Man when I think that this book is a bestseller. The tale "Iron John" may be wild in its pre-Grimm's origins, but Bly's book, despite all his analysis of the Wild Man, is exceedingly tame. I have barely scratched the surface of my problems with Bly's work, but I hope the few excerpts and comments I have presented will encourage critical examination of a vastly over-rated book.

## Sex Work

Reviewed by D.

*Sex Work: Writings By Women In the Sex Industry* edited by Frederique Delacoste and Priscilla Alexander (Cleis Press, POB 8933, Pittsburgh, PA. 15221. 1987). 349pp. \$12.95 paper.

This book from a feminist press is a collection of writings by women involved in many forms of sex work—streetwalking, massage parlors, escort services, topless dancing, pornography. The first half of the book consists of women telling their stories—how they got into sex work, how it affected them, what they learned and experienced. The styles and viewpoints are richly varied, often humorous and always held my interest, even though I'd never been particularly curious or concerned about prostitution before. Some tell of struggles with drugs,

violence or police harassment—"The police stopped me and searched my car. They took each condom out of its package and cut holes in each one...." Or struggles with people's attitudes—"No matter how long I've lived with the stigma of being a prostitute or a lesbian or anything that people think I shouldn't be, I can't seem to get used to being treated as though I am less than human. I don't think I ever will. It's always a shock to me."

But also there are stories like the one from the 55 year old woman who was mistaken for a prostitute in Paris and found herself embarking on a satisfying new career by accident; or the mother who bought precious time to be with her sick son by becoming a well-paid call girl and declares with enthusiasm, "It was a most useful tool. I did it, I'm glad I did it, and I applaud those who do it now." Then there's the lesbian stripper who finally came out to her feminist friends and organized a warm, sex-affirming strip show for the women's community.

Others offer nitty-gritty professional insights—this one from a live sex show performer—"Working with men is a strain because you've got to get them hard, even if you don't do the real thing. Nobody wants to sit there and see a man and woman fumbling, because that's what they do at home. They want to get ideas, go home and try new things. They think we're getting quality money, but we're only getting three hundred or four hundred dollars a week for six shows a day, seven days a week. I've never come on stage with a girl, a guy, or with myself. When I go out there, it's just like putting on a business suit and going downtown to work."

Why did these women become sex workers? For many, the answer can be summed up by "I'd rather suck cock than kiss ass." Debra, who worked in prostitution for 9 years, says "I had a 3.6 average in art school. I've worked in canning factories, which is horrendous work. That's why prostitution was so nice for me. Because you got a lot of money. You didn't take harassment. If someone patted my bottom, I got money for it. They didn't expect it to be part of the job." Others talk of the empowerment that comes from being in control of sex, of improved self image, or a pride in their skills in what they consider valuable and healing work. "I learned a woman could choose a job in the sex industry and not be a victim, but instead emerge even stronger and more self-confident, with a feeling even, of self-actualization."

Statements like this must be balanced with the facts that many women do not choose to work in the sex industry but are forced by severe economic conditions or by manipulation and coercion. This issue and others are addressed in the second half of the book which includes an article by Priscilla Alexander packed with information about the state of prostitution worldwide and efforts being made to better the lives of prostitutes. She discusses the need to dispel misinformation and go beyond the shame and prejudice that divides prostitutes from the rest of society, especially from other women and the feminist movement.

Several prostitutes' rights organizations are given space to describe themselves and their work, including the Red Thread which champions the interests of prostitutes in Holland, WHISPERS (Women Hurt in Systems of Prostitution Engaged in Revolt) and COYOTE (Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics). WHISPERS believes all prostitutes are victims and that prostitution can only be understood as an institution created by patriarchy to control and abuse women. "Prostitution isn't like anything else. Rather everything else is like prostitution, because it is the model for women's condition. For every real difference between women, prostitution exists to erase our diversity, distinction, and accomplishment while reducing all of us to meat to be bought, sold, traded, used, discarded, degraded, ridiculed, humiliated, maimed, tortured, and all too often, murdered for sex." COYOTE, on the other hand, believes that even in a perfect non-oppressive world, some women would still choose to make their living by prostitution.

All these groups are united, though, in calling for the decriminalization of prostitution. This is a main point in the charter of the First International Whores Congress which was held in Holland in 1985. In 1949, the UN passed a resolution which called for the decriminalization of prostitution which was read by Eleanor Roosevelt and has since been ratified by 50 countries, but not the United States. In this country, prostitutes are arrested 10 times more often than customers, though both are break-

## DANGEROUS RADIO

Though rebel and pirate radio stations have been a part of social movements in other countries for decades, they have rarely shown up in the U.S. However, an illegal community radio station in Springfield, Illinois, has operated out of an apartment in the Hay Homes federal housing project for years now. The tiny one-watt station and its director are in business, despite having been threatened by local police for violating Federal Communications Commission rules. It seems that in 1978 an FCC regulation was passed requiring FM radio stations to have a minimum operating power of 100 watts. And so the station, begun in 1985 as part of a tenants' rights movement, was hit with a variety of summonses, warnings, and police visits, all intended to shut it down. The latest news from Black Liberation Radio is even more chilling. One recent night during the broadcast of a live telephone interview on the topic of white supremacy, a bullet from a .357 Magnum smashed through a window, missing station director Mbanna Kantako's head by inches. After brushing off shards of glass, Kantako resumed broadcasting within minutes, replaying his tape of the attack frequently and challenging the attackers.

The Springfield police, who monitor and tape the station daily (because the station has been critical of police conduct in the area), never came to investigate. Nor did the Springfield Housing authority, whose agents periodically try to evict Kantako and his family. Furthermore, not one of the city's media outlets reported the story. Despite the struggles, the station continues to broadcast 24 hours a day, seven days a week, airing everything from interviews with activists and scholars, to alternative musical views about the Columbus Quincentennial. It's true community radio: although the station has a broadcast radius of less than two miles, due to segregated housing patterns, it reaches about three-fourths of the Black residents of the city.

You can help the station survive by directing financial support for tapes, postage and equipment to: Black Liberation Radio, 333 N. 12th Street, Springfield, IL 62702; telephone (217) 527-1298. Black Liberation Radio also publishes a newsletter.

From the *Minnesota Social Responsibilities Round Table Newsletter* (Chris Dodge/Jan DeSirey, 4645 Columbus Ave. S., Mpls., MN. 55407).



# The women's cancer epidemic

Review by Sally Gonick

*1 in 3: Women with Cancer Confront an Epidemic* edited by Judith Brady (Cleis Press, POB 8933, Pittsburgh, PA. 15221, 1991) 290pp. \$10.95 paper. \$24.95 hardcover.

**O**ne in Three, *Women with Cancer Confront an Epidemic*, a collection of women's writings about cancer edited by Judith Brady, is an emotionally powerful, entirely readable book which addresses a number of personal and political issues related to cancer.

The authors present several statistics about cancer. "Every year nearly a million people will be diagnosed with cancer and nearly half of those people will lose their lives to it within five years." Since this is a book written by and directed mainly towards women with cancer, breast cancer is a major focus.

"Breast cancer is an unchecked epidemic in this country. The annual number of women newly diagnosed with breast cancer in 1989 alone is significantly greater than the total number of AIDS deaths since they were first recorded in 1980, and breast cancer death rates are increasing. The mortality statistics from breast cancer have risen for women born into each succeeding decade of this century."

"Although breast cancer represents 14 percent of all cancers and 28 percent of the cancer in women in the United States, it receives just 4 percent of the research dollars." An increase in research dollars is far from the solution, however. "Because cures for most cancers are not likely in the near future, focusing so much money and energy on treatment research may be actually robbing us of the motivation and resources to try to prevent cancer."

This book is an excellent source of information regarding environmental and therefore preventable sources of cancer. One author refers to "a study done in 1984 for the Louisiana state legislature, a body not given to radical positions, [which] concluded that 'many, if not most, cancers are preventable'."

Numerous examples are provided of how corporate involvements in producing toxic chemicals, providing cancer detection equipment, manufacturing chemotherapy drugs, and serving as directors for the Board of the American Cancer Society, all serve to promote profits and sacrifice human lives. For instance, "DuPont, the world's largest chemical company, has recently gone into the business of selling medical equipment, including X-Ray film for mammogram machines. The same company has been identified by the Environmental Protection Agency as one producing a high cancer risk for emitting large amounts of butadiene from its Louisiana neoprene plant, and butadiene has been linked to breast cancer."

Besides South Africa, the United States is the only industrialized country in the world which does not have any type of national health insurance. "In a health care-for-profit system, cancer is an enormous generator of revenues for doctors, hospitals, drug companies and the many industries which surround medical care...At the average cancer treatment cost of \$30,000 per person, cancer has become the source of billions of dollars to the medical profession and all its allied industries."

Several authors examine how the media, the American Cancer Society and the National Cancer Institute most often present a falsely rosy and often completely misleading picture

concerning cancer prevention, detection and treatment. "The American Cancer Society not only refrains from criticisms of industrial pollution, it actively participates in the numbing of the American Public with comforting messages about 'advancements' in the treatment of cancer...In spite of the preponderance of evidence that the only viable approach to combatting the cancer epidemic is through swift, strict, and comprehensive environmental controls, the ACS turns the definition of 'cancer prevention' into an admonishment to visit your doctor more frequently!" Detection and prevention are often confused by the media as evidenced by "spurious statements such as 'Early detection is the best prevention!'"

Each author reveals her own personal experiences in dealing with cancer. One woman movingly describes her lonely moments and fears. "Sometimes in the middle of the night, when there is no friend around. This illness threatens your life. There are frightening, anguished moments that are really difficult to share...The idea of leaving my children is really hard. This is the hardest. I can't bear to think of my children's grief."

Women with cancer have to deal with well-meaning New Age healers who tend to blame people with cancer for causing their own disease. "The essence of the message was that I caused myself to have cancer because I had accumulated regrets and resentment in my past and present lives...Did the residents of Love Canal, whose homes were built over a toxic waste dump, cause their own cancer? Did the uranium miners in New Mexico and those in Colorado, whose town was built on uranium pillings, cause their own cancers from unresolved resentments?"

In our culture which worships the female breast and denies and hides the severity of the breast cancer epidemic, breast 'replacement' after mastectomy is the norm. Several women challenge the common misconception that the only choices after mastectomy are reconstruction or prosthesis. "I, too, refuse to be ashamed that I have had cancer. I refuse to be ashamed that I have had a mastectomy. My self-worth is not diminished. I will not act as if I have something to hide. I will not pretend to have a breast that I don't have."

Several women describe their efforts to challenge the cancer establishment through organizations such as the Women's Cancer Resource Center in Berkeley. A list of other women's cancer groups throughout the coun-

**In Response To A Promotional Ad Claiming that the Number of People Who Have Survived Cancer Could Now Fill the City of Los Angeles**  
By Sandra Steingraber

And the non-survivors fill the Pacific Ocean, the Grand Canyon and the whole of Antarctica. They fill our silences. And they fill our mouths when we try to speak. They inhabit vast and magnificent cities. The non-survivors remember Los Angeles as just a dot on the map—a stone's throw in the sticks where everybody knew each other's business. And then there is the wife of the man in Illinois: he's been walking the streets for thirty years because the space of her body fills every living room of every house he sees.

I say whoever writes P.R. for the American Cancer Society also writes P.R. for Dow Chemical and the Pentagon. Go talk to the Nevada rancher who looked up at the doctors and asked, "Who wants to survive chemotherapy just to live in L.A.?" Let's point out that the immigration laws in that town have not changed since 1950. And who can sleep; the breastless, hairless ones always scratching at the city walls, howling at the gates all night. Everybody wants to be an angel.

The dead are smaller than us. We have to remember that. The dead take up so little room. Their houses are modest, they drive small cars. They've stopped dreaming of going West.

You called this morning to say a new tumor had flowered in your liver and another in a small coil of the intestine. I murmured something, promised to make a few phone calls. I hardly know you actually. But I had mentioned once that I was a resident of that lucky city. Sweet California.

Reprinted with permission from the author from *Sex Work* (Cleis Press, Pittsburgh, PA., 1987). This poem originally appeared in *Benchmark: Anthology of Contemporary Illinois Poetry* (Stormline Press, Champaign, IL., 1988).

try plus ideas for accessing information are provided. The personal barriers to becoming a "cancer activist" are also described and this issue is not often addressed. "It is easier to get involved with refugees in Central America than with homelessness in your own city, I have often heard remarked. And so it is. Demonstrators step over the bodies of their invisible compatriots on their way to the protest. For me, dealing with the social implications of

cancer can feel like being forced to look at my own body lying in the street—or, more accurately, curled around a catheter tube in a hospital bed."

*One in Three* is an excellent, comprehensive overview of the personal, environmental, political aspects of cancer. The authors effectively challenge the dominant rhetoric, ineffective medical techniques, and misguided priorities affecting millions of women.

## The ideology of ideologies

George Walford's *Beyond Politics & Angles on Anarchism*

Reviewed by Lev Chernyi

*Beyond Politics: An Outline of Systematic Ideology* by George Walford (Calabria Press, 15 Calabria Rd., London N5 1JB, England, 1990) 155pp. £2.95 paper. £9.95 hardcover.

*Angles on Anarchism* by George Walford (Calabria Press, 15 Calabria Rd., London N5 1JB, England, 1991) 66pp. £2.00/\$4.00 pamphlet (postpaid from publisher).

**T**he concept of ideology has fairly recent origins. The word was coined by the French writer A.L.C. Destutt de Tracy in 1796 to name his "science of ideas." Since that time use of the term has been divided between two general senses, one positive and one negative. In its more positive (and usually positivist) sense ideology is used as an objective or 'scientific' term for any systematic political theory held by an individual or group. In its more negative (and critical) sense ideology is used to indicate those aspects of any theory which are complicit with structures of social domination, exploitation or alienation. The positivist sense of the word is most useful to those who defend dominant (or would-be dominant) institutions, while the critical sense is most useful to radicals and revolutionaries. Unsurprising-

*"Like the 'end of ideology' arguments which became fashionable in academia in the 1950s, Walford's 'systematic ideology' functions effectively as a stick to club unruly radical ideas into civilized pigeonholes where it is hoped they won't be as likely to cause any damage to ruling ideas and practices."*

ly, in the world of academic discourse the positivist sense of the word is king.

George Walford's book *Beyond Politics* and his pamphlet *Angles on Anarchism* are both attempts at popularizing a particular positivist conception of ideology first attributed by Walford to Harold Walsby, whose only book, *The Domain of Ideologies*, was published in 1947. For Walsby, this conception of ideology was intended to explain why it was that 100 years of socialist organizing had failed to move the world closer to a genuine socialism of

"common ownership and democratic control of the means of production." (*Beyond Politics* p.2) However, in attempting to explain this notable discrepancy between the originally idealistic expectations of the socialist movement and the miserable social realities of this century, Walsby was only able to construct a categorical schema of "systematic ideology" which naturalized existing relationships of domination at the same time as it idealized even further the impulses to radical social change. In effect, Walsby and Walford attempt to 'explain' current social reality by reifying it, by assuming it is only natural to begin with! That this strategy is akin to any other ideological (in the critical sense of the term) defense of domination, such as that of the patriarchal domination of powerful men over women, never seems to occur to them. Yet, because Walsby and Walford's entire perspective is based upon this fallacious naturalization (or reification) of social domination, most of the arguments which ensue in *Beyond Politics* and *Angles on Anarchism* range from amusingly naive to downright bizarre. That some people will take this confused array of pseudo-scientific categorization seriously would be merely unfortunate if it wasn't for the fact that Walford seems to have targeted the anarchist movement for dissemination of these essentially anti-anar-

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## Sex Work *Continued from left*

ing the same law. Prostitutes who walk the streets and aren't white and middle class are arrested much more often than others. At the same time, police protection is nearly nonexistent. The belief is strong that a prostitute can't be raped, and often murders aren't investigated until several women have died.

The theme of the book then, might be that violence, economic coercion, patriarchal attitudes and laws that objectify and control women's bodies are concerns which prostitutes share with all women in our sexist world. And that prostitutes and ex-prostitutes are varied, strong and valuable people to seek as allies.

## The Atheist Cult

*The Atheist Cult* by Fred Woodworth (The Match Press, POB 3488, Tucson, AZ. 85722; 1991) 38pp \$2.00 pamphlet

For decades Madalyn Murray O'Hair has attempted to build her organization, American Atheists, into a platform through which she could rule as the new atheist 'Pope'. This entertaining pamphlet on *The Atheist Cult* goes into the details of just one disgusting episode of her empire-building attempts, in which she threatened to charge the author, Fred Woodworth (well-known editor of the anarchist journal, *The Match!*), with federal crimes in return for his volunteered help with the Arizona chapter of O'Hair's organization. This pamphlet is must reading for anyone who's ever joined or considered joining American Atheists, as well as for anyone interested in the current sad state of organized U.S. atheists and one of the reasons for it. In Fred Woodworth's own words, this pamphlet relates: "How Madalyn Murray O'Hair's American Atheists organization actually functions using vicious abuse, intimidation, sycophancy and extreme authoritarianism. An account by a long-time Atheist activist who relates his own experiences with and observations of, this dangerous repression masquerading as progressivism." -L.C.

## Greening the city or the slave quarters?

*Green Cities: Ecologically Sound Approaches to Urban Space* edited by David Gordon (Black Rose Books, 3981 St-Laurent Blvd. Suite 444, Montréal, Québec H2W 1Y5, Canada, or 340 Nagel Dr., Cheektowaga, NY, 14225, USA, 1990) 300pp. \$19.95 paper. \$39.95 hardcover.

Before anything else is said, the most notable aspect of *Green Cities* is its specialized, academic focus and tone. Although it isn't mentioned anywhere in the book, this anthology grew out of the Pollution Probe Foundation's International Symposium on Greening the City, and would have greatly benefitted from a description of the Symposium's organization, goals and range of participants. Instead, this anthology gives us an unexplainedly narrow conception of what it might mean to 'green the city,' while hardly referring to the overwhelming realities we face within an international economy based on capital accumulation, the subjugation and progressive destruction of organic communities, and the massive reduction of the natural

world to mere economic resources which are exploited without thought for social or ecological consequences.

Rather than considering what it might be like to radically reconstruct cities and countryside socially & ecologically through a revolutionary historical process with a 'green' vision, *Green Cities* is in general content to prescribe, analyze and exhibit specialized, technical, and usually isolated, instances of 'greening' public spaces and institutions by rather uncritically bringing "together the notions of urbanism and nature." In this regard the book is a huge disappointment. Although it must also be said that in regard to the narrow focus in which this collection of essays actually operates, *Green Cities* can also be considered a significant, but limited success.

The book is divided into three parts. In the first the notion of the "Green City" is discussed and/or defined by what seem to be mostly professors and government advisors. The second part consists of accounts of "Naturalization at Work," or in other words, of techniques of restoration and re-'naturalization' of certain park areas and other limited spaces by environmental professionals and professors. While the third part offers examples of how certain reformist organizations have attempted to realize very limited notions of the "green city" in practice. The ultimately co-optative import of the book's lessons might well be summarized by an uncritical anecdote delivered by David Goode in the introduction:

"I well remember the mayor of a London borough, surprised by the massive turn-out for the opening of a nature reserve, turn to his Chief Executive and say, 'You know, this is the most popular thing we have ever done. We had better have another of these.'"

Indeed, as long as we can elect politicians who will allow us a few isolated nature reserves to 'green' our cities, why bother confronting the larger forces which are devastating the remnants of human community and annihilating entire ecosystems around the planet? As long as it remains unquestioned that cities must function as the slave quarters for the modern industrial leviathan, why shouldn't we

# Alternative press books

Short reviews by Lev Chernyi

be satisfied with academics, eco-professionals and government advisors who advocate merely greening the slave quarters? -L.C.

## Playthings

'Playthings' by Rolando Perez (Theatre of Sorts, POB 80044, Akron, OH. 44308, 1991) audio cassette \$1.00 (include 75¢ for postage).

'Playthings' is an engaging piece of audio theater which investigates the power and exchange relationships between a banker and a dominatrix prostitute. The prostitute is played by Teresa Hurray with gusto, while the banker is played more tentatively by Tommy Hurray. Wendy S. Duke also makes an 'appearance' as the mistress of the house. Overall the production is well done and recommended. -L.C.

## Satanism in America

*Satanism in America: How the Devil Got Much More Than His Due* by Shawn Carlson & Gerald Larue (Gaia Press, POB 466, El Cerrito, CA. 94530-0466, 1989) 283pp. \$12.95 paper.

With the recent accusations that there are more than 800 Mormon church-affiliated Satanists in the Salt Lake City area, the American Satanist scare was reinvigorated once again. The extensive national publicity engendered by one memo from a member of the crazed ruling bishopric of the Mormon cult will do more than a thousand denials or rebuttals, or even fruitless investigations, could ever do bury this type of charge. There has long been abundant evidence that American religious cults from Baptists to Roman Catholics, and from Moonies to Zen Buddhists engage in (often systematically) abusive practices as Baptists, Catholics, Moonies and Buddhists. But leave it to the mass media to fan the flames of hysteria with evidenceless charges concerning a barely existent brand of unconventional religious doctrine—Satanism!

Shawn Carlson and Gerald Larue have

published the fascinating book *Satanism in America* as their final report on the Satanism scare for the Committee for Scientific Examination of Religion. Carlson is a physicist and computer analyst; Larue is professor of Biblical History and Archaeology, as well as of Gerontology at USC. As might be guessed from their work, their analyses of Satanism and the hysteria surrounding it rely heavily on prevailing mainstream scientific and religious prejudices. Yet, despite this limitation, the study is an excellent critical introduction to the subject.

Carlson and Larue point out that because of the current Satanist hysteria, "False information is being uncritically accepted by...law enforcement agencies, psychologists, religious leaders and special interests who have turned their energies and resources toward rooting out the 'Satanic threat'...hundreds of people have been indicted on allegations of involvement in Satanic child abuse rings...lives have been destroyed by unproven and untrue accusations of ritual child abuse which were processed only because of the constant agitation and rumor mongering." (p.4) *Satanism in America* analyzes and debunks some of the major allegations concerning Satanism. It examines some of the widespread social and institutional effects produced by the scare. And it examines some of the prime movers in the Satanist conspiracy hoax.

You've seen the headlines. Chances are you know some of the people who have been deluded by the media hysteria. Maybe you even know some of the victims of false accusations. At last, here's an opportunity to get a sane view of the subject that exposes Satanic conspiracies as nothing more than the invention of Christian fundamentalists with an not so hidden agenda of social reaction. -L.C.

## Housmans Peace Diary

*Housmans Peace Diary 1992* (Housmans, 5 Caledonian Road, Kings Cross, London N1 9DX, England, 1991) unpaginated \$10.95 paper (Air postage from publisher is \$3.30)

The *Housmans Peace Diary* is primarily a calendar for making notes of appointments for the year. Secondly, it includes a "unique world peace directory, listing over 2100 peace, environmental, and human rights organizations" in over 110 countries. Organizations and publications listed are for the most part pacifist, liberal, academic, single-issue reformists, or religious. Few genuinely anti-capitalist or anarchist groups made the list (none in the extensive U.S. section). For mid-

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**Compiled by Lev Chernyi**

**Rewolta: #6**/Mar.'91 (Piotr Salwowski, ul. Mieszka I 48, 05-090 Raszyn, Poland) is a 16-page, Polish language journal produced in Warsaw by Alternatywa Społeczna/Alternative Society Movement/Anarchist Federation activists. Issue #6 includes "Osobowość autorytarna" (on the authoritarian personality), a piece on "Quatting" and "Dzień przed yuppifikacją" ("The day before yuppi-cation," on recent changes in the Polish economy/culture). Send a contribution for a sample copy.

## Notes on the Mexican anarchist gathering «Salud y Anarquía»

On September 14th to 16th, 1991, the first national gathering of Mexican anarchists occurred on a beautiful farm named the Centro de Investigación Acción Comunitaria in Ocotepéc, a small town near Mexico City. Representing various Mexican anarchist groups approximately 60 people of various ages and backgrounds attended this Mexican independence weekend gathering. Introductions and the presentation of several papers initiated the convention, organized mostly by a group consisting of one woman and two men. Sitting quietly in a Mexican-style stone and mortar building, we listened to a paper discussing the history of Mexican anarchism including the publications and organizations involved, like Siglo XIX, *Regeneración* (a newspaper of the 1910 Mexican Revolution) and *Antorcha*. A description of the rise of the bourgeois ruling party, the PRI, and its recent (and chronic) electoral fraud was given. The multitude of oppressions in Mexico

required, according to one participant, an anti-capitalist, cultural, sexual, anti-ageist, political, ecological revolution.

As the Cuernavaca sky clouded, a discussion followed on the incompatibility of Marxism's centralist tendencies and anarchism, as well as on recent personal experiences of a women's "punk collective." From the discussion and papers, Marxism seemed to be an important topic for many of the anarchists in attendance.

The participants feasted on some great Mexican-style vegetarian meals and slept in a two-story "boarding house" on the farm. Anarchist literature was distributed—including comic books, pamphlets and copies of *Love and Rage*.

About twenty Mexican anarchist groups refused to send representatives to the conference, reportedly because of the open invitation of non-Mexicans. In attendance were several people from the southern U.S. and some vocal

Spaniards who participated in the Spanish Revolution in the 1930s. (In their intense emotional exchanges, the Spaniards contributed more than their fair share to the discussions of the Mexican anarchist movement.) The boycotting organizations reportedly did not want to be dominated by foreigners.

Participants decided to split into three workshops on the second day. The group on 'Culture' talked about the re-education of people to "liberty, equality and responsibility." Another workshop dealt with "National and Local Organization and Autogestion ('self-management')." The third group rewrote a tract titled "Socialist Humanism," to espouse anarchist principles. Some in this group preferred not to use the word 'anarchist' because of the widespread misunderstandings about it. Ideas in the tract included subordinating consumption and production to the "development of the individual," self-management of the means of production, maximization of decentralization, attacking the "cult of the state," and opposition to war and "reactionary violence" in all its

forms (in favor of a peace with social justice). The whole question of revolutionary violence was controversial during the gathering.

On the final cloudy and chilly day, the convention decided to form a three-month central committee to make some "political waves." Out of a list of ten proposals considered, it was decided that the most immediate priority was to spread information about the October 2, 1968 Mexico City student massacre by government troops. The committee will be responsible for spreading information and generally will act as a center of subversion. The second national gathering will take place in another 14 months.

The disposition of the \$1,500 in leftover funds that had been donated by the Without Borders group for a continental anarchist gathering in Mexico caused an uproar in the past year. The \$350 that was actually returned was donated to the growing Mexico City anarchist bookstore. It is unclear what will become of the rest of the money owed.

-By Claude B.

## The anarchist scene

Compiled by Lev Chernyi

THE 1992 CIRCLE A ROUND-UP! will take place on the first weekend of '92 in Austin, Texas. Proposed "topics for discussion and workshops include: anarchist organizing, the @ computer network, the present and future of @ism, developing an @ community, situationist tactics and the revolution of everyday life." For more information contact: Rob Los Ricos (504 W. 24th #81, Austin, TX. 78705).

**SPEAK OUT 1991-1992** (Institute for Social and Cultural Change, 116 Saint Botolph St., Boston, MA. 02115) is the 40-page catalog of the political speakers bureau affiliated with *Z Magazine* and South End Press. This is the place to arrange for lectures from Philip Agee to Howard Zinn, including other authors like Noam Chomsky, Ward Churchill and Holly Sklar.

**VIOLENCE AND ANARCHISM and Other Essays** by Alexander Berkman is no. 6 in the Perennial Pamphlets series, available from Perennial Books (Box B14, Montague, MA. 01351). Other pamphlets include *The Dominant Idea and Why I am an Anarchist* by Voltairine de Cleyre (no.2) and *The Trial and Imprisonment of Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman* (no.4). No prices given.

**LEFT BANK DISTRIBUTION** (4142 Brooklyn NE, Seattle, WA. 98105) has a brand new 56-page, Fall 1991 catalog out now. Left Bank Books is a collectively owned & operated project which includes two bookstores, a book publishing house, retail and wholesale mailorder distribution, and a free books-to-prisoners program. Left Bank Distribution, offering over 800 books & pamphlets, has one of the largest selections of anti-authoritarian books in the world! Write now for a free copy of their catalog, a *must* for everyone.

**PREVAILING WINDS RESEARCH** (POB 23511, Santa Barbara, CA. 93121) has a very interesting 30-page Summer/Fall 1991 catalog out focussing on power structure, political conspiracy, and revisionist historical books & tapes. Titles include *Old Nazis & the New Right* by Russ Bellant, John Cummings' *US Intelligence & International Terrorism*, and Ward Churchill & Russell Means' *Israeli Aggression in the Middle East*.

**CLEIS PRESS** (POB 8933, Pittsburgh, PA. 15221) has published an interesting, new 16-page Fall '91 book catalog, including new releases like *1 in 3: Women with Cancer Confront an Epidemic* edited by Judith Brady and a new translation of the Hungarian novel *Another Love* by Erzsébet Galgóczi, along with a backlist featuring Susie Bright's *Susie Sexpert's Lesbian Sex World*, *AIDS: The Women* edited by Ines Rieder & Patricia Ruppelt, and *Sex Work: Writings by Women in the Sex Industry* edited by Frédérique Delacoste & Priscilla Alexander.

**PERENNIAL BOOKS IS NOW OPEN** to the public with a collection of anarchist titles available in a room at The Book Mill in Montague, Massachusetts (about 15 miles north of Northampton/Amherst, 1½ hours west of Boston, or about 15 miles south of the Vermont/N.H./Mass. borders). The store is open everyday from 10AM to 6PM, and the Perennial Books proprietor himself, John Petrovato, is available there 5 days of each week (if you want to catch him you can call [413] 367-9206 to make sure he's there). The Book Mill "also has excellent space for lectures, meetings, etc. People in the area should contact John for further info. and organizing possibilities."

**INDIVIDUAL COPIES OF North American Anarchist Review #2 & #4** are available for a 29¢ SASE for one or a 52¢ SASE for both from C.A.L. (POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446). Other *NAAR* issues (#1, #3 & #5) are no longer available except in the respective back issues in which they were published as inserts.

A 1992 ANARCHIST ANTI-500 Centenary T-shirt, printed black on red, is available for \$15 postpaid from Ralf G. Landmesser, Rathenower Str. 23, D/W-1000 Berlin 21, Germany. The design appears to be a somewhat imaginative circle-A totem pole with small figures collectively in the shape of 1992 dancing around it with weapons brandished (bow, spear, sword).

**THE LAST FEW COPIES OF ANARCHY** back issues #6 and #7 are going fast. If you want to get one or the other before they're gone forever, send \$2.50 for a copy of one issue, or \$4.50 for both to C.A.L. (POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446).

**THEATER OOBLECK** (5153 N. Ashland, Chicago, IL., phone: [312] U-STILL-R), a directorless collective, will present a new play, "Gone," from Dec. 5 through Jan. 25th. "Shows are \$4—free if yer broke."

**AN ANARCHIST ACTIVIST CENTER** is opening in Los Angeles (7146 Remmet Ave. #120, Canoga Pk., CA. 91303; phone [818] 905-4631). "Anarchist media are encouraged to set up tables on weekends. Activists are encouraged to call and get involved."

**SELECTED BACK ISSUES OF ANARCHY: A Journal of Desire Armed** (C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446) are available for free distribution in bulk for the cost of postage and packaging. We have extras of several issues including #19, #22, #23, #24 and a few of #26 still available. For those living in the U.S., we suggest you send about 15¢ to 25¢ each (depending on the size of the issue[s] requested, and your distance from Missouri) for 50 to 150 copies (unless you live in the Midwest, send a minimum of \$7.50, and make any checks out to "C.A.L." only). Those outside the U.S. obviously need to send *much* more to cover the higher costs of postage. Copies will all be marked "FREE" on the cover. To order bulk copies for resale, see the terms listed in the box on page 3.

**A COUPLE HUNDRED BULK COPIES OF North American Anarchist Review #4/Spring-Summer '91**, are still available for free distribution by bookstores, anarchist centers, and others who want to promote anarchist publishing and distribution. Send \$5 for 50 copies, \$8 for 100 copies, or \$10 for 200 copies to C.A.L. (POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65202-1446) and make any checks out to "C.A.L." only).

*If you have announcements concerning anarchist gatherings, new publications, or other anarchist activities or projects which our readers might find of use, you can send them to: Attn. Anarchist Scene, c/o C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446. Please remember, for more information, or for ordering materials listed in this column, you must write to the addresses given above and not to C.A.L.*

## Report from the Greek anarchist movement Death of an anarchist

"We have to stand up for our comrades"

-Union of Greek Anarchists

On the morning of October 1, 1990, after a telephone call by an informer, two police patrol cars arrived at the place where according to the tip some men were trying to steal a Peugeot. The cops got out of their cars and opened fire, but they received gunfire as well. A chase began while other police cars were directed to the area.

The Peugeot, belonging to Attica governor Tsimboukis, had been 'expropriated' from the driveway of the governor's house where Isidoros Vlaikidis, the governor's driver and security service officer, had parked it. Vlaikidis had reported its theft one hour earlier, and police cars were searching for the car throughout Attica. When the informer tipped off police about the Peugeot, they were sure this was the right one and moved in faster than ever. Clearchos Smirnaos was arrested in the area and brutally beaten by cops and "indignant citizens" (plainclothes cops). He denied any relation with the event, while police found no traces of any other men for hours.

Meanwhile, two other men—Christophoros Marinos and Michalis Prekas—entered a flat using a small ladder, finding three women and a man there. The two hunted men calmed the man, Carnis, and his family, telling them that they were anarchists and there was nothing to be afraid of. The two simply wanted to be hidden because they were on the run from the police. Prekas even offered Carnis his single bullet-loaded gun, which he carried to commit suicide if he failed to escape being arrested. Prekas urged Carnis to kill him if he thought Prekas and his comrade would harm them. And the two promised to send flowers, if they ever managed to escape.

The women were allowed to go down to the flat's ground floor, where Mrs. Carnis spoke to her father, who called the police. Mr. Carnis promised that he would take the two men away in his car. But the moment he turned the ignition, he pressed the alarm system as well. From this point, the paid murderers of the State discharged their 'duty'.

EKAM forces (special anti-terrorist armed forces) and cops of every kind surrounded Carnis' house. Some cops made an effort to enter with a key that was given to them, but shots were fired from inside, lightly wounding one.

Later, one of the anarchists shouted to police that he wanted to give up and came out with his hands up. Christophoros Marinos, 21 year old, was immediately beaten by cops passing themselves off as "angry citizens."

Inside the flat, Michalis Prekas, all by himself, prepared for his death. Police Commissioner Vlahakis called Prekas from a neighboring house and asked him to give up. Prekas' answer to that was: "Go fuck off. Either I or you will die." Responding to the spitting contempt, Vlahakis ordered his men to "shoot him in cold blood" in front of the tenants of the block of flats.

One young girl from another flat called up Prekas and tried to convince him to surrender. He explained to her that he was determined to

fight 'til death to avoid arrest. Then he phoned his friends in order to say his last goodbyes. To his best friend, he said he had few bullets and he was keeping the last for himself. When the man exhorted him to surrender, Michalis angrily answered that he didn't want any words of defeatism, he didn't want to fall into their hands again and be humiliated. The only things he asked was: "Fetch the reporters to see how cops murder and the way we die," and if he (his friend) wanted to, he could come watch also. Michalis remained cool and determined.

An hour later, Michalis put on a white shirt and came out with a gun in each hand, shouting to the cops: "Come on, you bastards, shoot me now." Machine guns fired as he shot once and ran to the middle of the balcony. There, shouting and standing erect, he met a rain of bullets. He fired twice more and fell fatally wounded on the balcony, while the police gunfire continued.

The criminals of authority ran with frantic joy as they rushed at Prekas and snatched his sick, emaciated, dying body (he had been seriously ill recently). They dragged him like a sack. Cops and the "indignant citizens" shouted that he should be carried to the hospital slowly so he would bleed to death. He died on the way.

His young comrade, Christophoros, was near and witnessed the scene. Cops took him to the Security Service Headquarters, beating him all the way.

From that moment, a series of arrests began against anarchists and everybody who is considered to be Prekas' friend. First of all, Evaggelia Voyiatzi and Evaggelia Galani were arrested in Saint Olga Hospital where they had gone to see if Prekas was alive; they were arrested as witnesses without any legal procedure and beaten when they refused to follow police.

Police then raided comrades' houses or they arrested them outside their houses. Policemen entered the Antiauthoritarian Club in A. Patisia and arrested, with guns in their hands, all present young habitués without any warrants or summonses for their arrests. About 100 people were arrested. To their lawyers, police denied that they detained anyone arrested, while a late afternoon TV program spoke of 17 arrests.

### Police fictions

In Security Service Offices, the cops played their well worn roles: mild questioning alternating with ferocity and pricks of remorse, a pistol to threaten, the refusal of food, and inquisition to the point, "What kind of music do you prefer?"

They let most of the detainees go while they turned E. Voyiatzi from a witness to accused; they also accused Sotiris Koskinas, George Ameralis, and Sp. Sirigos of "cultivation, harvest, and drug possession by profession and complicity in." Ameralis was also accused of drug use because of 14 hemp plants which



*"Millions of shocked people had watched Michalis's murder on TV. Thousands of telephone calls, full of anger, were made to the newspapers."*

were 'found' on his farm.

Finally, Nick Baroutas and his son Costas were arrested for weapons possession, because of 39 cartridges from their father's legally owned rifle and Costas' souvenir stiletto from Rhodes were found in their home.

On the 2nd of October, police arrested Gerasimos Boukouvalas—a well-known anarchist—in a spectacular and terrorizing manner. With guns in hand, four police officers immobilized customers in cafe Tsaf in the Exarchia area, among them a five-year-old boy who had a gun placed in his face. Meanwhile special police forces surrounded the whole area and the 'terrorist' was arrested without the 'heroic' police suffering any loss.

Although Boukouvalas was supposedly arrested in relation to the hide-out of Antikratiki Pali (an armed group which appeared in 1985), whose hide-out had been found months earlier, he was referred to the Public Prosecutor as a member of Michalis Prekas' group without any evidence.

"We touched the terrorists." Minister of Public Security Drossoyiannis had declared earlier in August: Police had been preparing their plot for a long time. They wanted to weave the 'story' well in detail so as to avoid a new fiasco as had happened so many times in the past. Now, wanting to distract the shocked public from Michalis Prekas' heroic stand in Calogreza, police hastened the facts.

Police arrested and suggested E. Voyiatzi and M. Boukouvalas were members of Antikratiki Pali, or of the revolutionary group Christos Tsoutsouvis, together with the other two arrested men, Michalis Prekas and the as yet at large Balafas and Lesperoglou. They leaked out information, for instance, that fingerprints had been found in the earlier discovered Antikratiki Pali hide-out.

The lawyers protested the fact that there was no evidence relating to Boukouvalas released from Security Service, but were ignored by the Public Prosecutor, who by doing so, served the commands of the Police and government administration. A new fiasco is in the making.

The accused were kept in Security Service Offices until they came up before the examiner on October 5th. They have since been transferred to Koridallou prison.

### Smirnaio & Marinos

Clearchos Smirnaio, even as a student, was involved in the anarchist movement, and he was among the leading activists in Zographou High School. When the protests for Zographou park in Papandreou St. began, he was arrested for his activism. He was beaten and sentenced for his activity. He was also among those who managed to expel the fascist Parissinos (a member of Cyprus' Parliament) from Greece.

Smirnaio took part and fought actively in the anarchist movement, and he was again arrested in 1986 after a march commemorating the Greek people's anti-fascist revolt in 1973 (at the Polytechnic School in Athens on Nov. 17, 1973) and in memory of our comrade M. Kaltezas who was murdered by cops that same day in 1985. Smirnaio was also arrested during the streetsweepers' strike because he dared to resist armed police forces who attacked the strikers in Omonia Square, and again went on trial where he claimed the right to defend his human dignity. Now, in Security Service Offices, he refused to say anything or make any statement.

Christophoros Marinos, though less known than others because he had never been arrested before, participated in the anarchist movement early in his life through leaflets, proclamations, and interventions in schools, universities, and in his neighborhood through the Antiauthoritarian Club's activities in A. Patisia-Philadelfia.

He belonged to the group, that in a public debate in the town hall, dared to denounce the principals of "the murderers' association" (the ex-mayor of N. Chalkidona and other 'respectable' citizens who were killing old people to inherit their property), and so he was beaten by the local authorities. Inside Carnis's house, his attitude indicated the consistency of his word and character. He would "send some flowers" to Carnis if they managed to escape.

Marinos didn't see the relationship between the "murderers' association" and the informers of Carnis' family, though both of them belong to the realm of *respectable citizens*.

He charges were severe, and in his statements to police, he declared that he belonged to the Union of Anarchists. His bruised eyes, his swollen and tired face indicated the cops' beatings. He had witnessed his comrade's execution as well as being brutally tortured. His mother says: "It is an honor to me, to have such a son."

Millions of shocked people had watched Michalis's murder on TV. Thousands of telephone calls, full of anger, were made to the newspapers. Shortly after, police made an effort to conceal the event, trying to impress public opinion with the successive 'achievements' of the Security Service: hide-outs, weapons, "new evidence," and new arrests made up the whole scene. Police leaked information to the press, so it slowly spread and ended up as headlines in the papers talking about 'break-downs', 'betrayals', and 'suspicious' connections of the arrested. They hint at connections with either Clearchos or Christophoros. They try, in the confusion, to create the misleading impression that the men are suspect or inclined to treachery, while both Clearchos and Christophoros are highly spoken of by those who know them very well. On the other hand, their statements in the Security Service Offices and their anarchist attitude towards authority are absolutely clear. And this is the reason why the paid pen-pushers and cops feel so annoyed.

Police always try to cast suspicions on social fighters and upright men. But they have failed in this case. Our comrades, despite their young age, with their attitude show who they are.

### The "respectable citizens"

At first, the "respectable citizens" appeared proud for their direct complicity in Michalis' murder. They betrayed those who did nothing to harm them and who trusted them. Prekas and Marinos made the mistake of trusting people who had no intention of reciprocating their trust.

The next day, fearing for their miserable existence, the Carnis family claimed that it all happened by accident, the alarm system worked by mistake, the cops were tipped off by someone else and so on, and so on. They got to the point of saying that the two anarchists had told them that "we are anarchists from the ELA" (ELA is a Greek urban guerrilla group) while everyone, particularly the police, already knew that ELA's ideas were far from the anarchists'.

### The funeral of Michalis

Hundreds of people followed funeral in Brahami on the 2nd of October, though it hadn't become largely known.

Comrades with black and red flags and raised fists, relatives, and friends burst into applause and shouted: "Honor and glory to Michalis Prekas," and "Blood flows asking to take revenge," when Prekas was transferred to his grave.

"They killed the brave lad," people shouted, and asked to open his coffin because it had been shut until that moment. When it opened, new slogans about Michalis and revenge were heard.

Cops watched the entire time, as Michalis' friends and relatives spoke about him and expressed their indignation at his assassination to reporters.

### Who was Michalis Prekas

Michalis Prekas grew up in the Brahami slum. From early in his childhood, he had to earn his own living. He illegally sold various things on the road. The first time he got a good thrashing by cops was when he was a little boy because he was caught selling combs without a license! In this way, he got started in his hatred of cops.

As with many young men at his age, he was fond of motorcycles and cars, and since he could not afford to get one, he began joyriding

and taunting authority.

Motorcycle-hunts and shitbags thrown at police cars, made him known as 'Caprola' in Brahami, Glifada, Kalamaki, and Faliro. The cops didn't know who he was because he was always able to get away.

When he was about eighteen he embarked for the U.S., and when the ship reached America he left it secretly. After a few months, he was arrested as an illegal immigrant and imprisoned until he was deported back to Greece.

Motorcycles and luxurious cars, particularly Porsches, fascinated him. He took them from villas in Glifada and Voula, sometimes in the very middle of the day.

Eventually, he was arrested for thefts, implicated by others' confessions, and he refused to cooperate with cops. However, many times he assumed full responsibility for everything in order to help his friends.

Torture, of course, followed all of his arrests. The cops always had to chase him for a long time, so they wreaked their fury on him whenever they caught him. During his imprisonment, his contempt for guards and creeps cost him continual disciplinary measures.

He escaped from the juvenile prison in Vouliagmeni, just a few meters away from an armed guard. A hunt began, but he completely disappeared, helped by some old people from

Continued on page 15

## Argentine anti-authoritarians appeal for solidarity

**E** Grupo Impulso Autogestionario (Group for the Encouragement of Self-Management), la Biblioteca "Alberto Ghirardo" library and the Centro De Estudios Sociales "Rafael Barrett" (social studies center), together with the Unión Socialista Libertaria (Libertarian Socialist Alliance) and the Taller Ecologista (Ecology Workshop), have all had to move once again. In the last five years we have had to move three times, and this has made our functioning much more difficult because it has taken a lot of our time and energy.

We have had to move so often because of economic problems. And now the same kind of problems are threatening the continuation of our endeavors. In order to deal with present needs and to work toward acquiring our own building, we are appealing for solidarity and support from our comrades abroad, especially in the so-called 'developed' countries. The current depressed economic situation in Argentina is making it impossible for us to continue with our

activities and projects without outside economic help.

We would therefore appreciate any and all donations, no matter how small. We would also be grateful for any help you can give in reproducing and distributing this appeal. Checks or money orders should be made out to either Carlos Solero or Pedro Munich and sent to:

C.C. 984  
2000 Rosario  
Argentina

We will tell those who send donations about how the money is used, about the concrete activities we undertake and the outcomes of our projects. Finally, we'd like to thank all our comrades and sympathizers in advance for their solidarity.

From Rosario, we send you our fraternal libertarian greetings.

Translated by Charlata Stew (POB 31461, Seattle, WA. 98103).

## Letter from Argentina

### Dear Comrades,

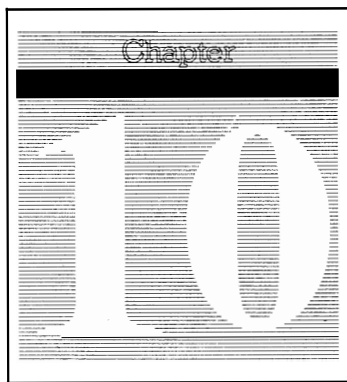
As regards our movement, it began to lose its strength, its influence since 1930, mainly because its most important activists and thinkers were all in prison...or had been killed. In the 1950s, there was a renewed interest among comrades, but the activities lasted for ten or fifteen years only. It was since 1980 that young people either belonging to the movement or not, began to feel more and more inclined to our ideas so that many groups have formed, all of them sharing an aim: to put in practice what is proposed by theory. Of course, many of these groups disappeared some time later for a number of reasons...that's why there are so many anarchists still disseminated, though, from time to time, they show up in the FORA (anarcho-syndicalist union), or in the Argentine Libertarian Federation (FLA), or in the "José Ingenieros" Library, places people go in search of some new printed material, or to be informed of some activity, or even to take part in some of them. But that's not all. In Mar del Plata there used to be a group which was carrying out a very interesting intellectual activity. The problem is that we haven't heard from them for a year or so. In Córdoba there used to be quite a large group formed by middle-aged as well as teenaged comrades. As most middle-aged comrades had to move to other provinces looking for new jobs, there remained only a middle-aged comrade and the teens. She and the boys do whatever they can. In La Rioja is living another comrade who is also an ecologist and works the land. In Jujuy there's a community and in Rosario (Santa Fe), our group has formed two cooperatives: the first is a cooperative of work, and we sell books at very low prices; the second has been formed together with an ecologist group, and we buy fruits and vegetables at very good prices which are sold as inexpensively as possible, trying to get some small profit out of it, just to be able to have some extra money when buying the goods. Besides, there is a group of social studies and even naturalists meet and develop their activities in our house. The goal is to establish a community in the near future. There are other comrades in Rafaela and Las Rosas (Santa Fe), as well as in some other cities across the country.

As for the institutional life of our country, there is a democracy—a formal democracy—from 1984. During the Alfonsín administration the currency was changed; there were three military revolts, a group of radical trotskyists tried to take over the military emplacement known as "La Tablada"; the inflation rose to the cosmos and the people plundered the shops and supermarkets of their goods in Rosario, Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Tucumán and other cities. The point is that the Justicialist Party together with the industrialists and the right provoked the fall of Alfonsín's administration, which seems even more clear to us if we take into account that during five and a half years there was freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom to practice your own religion, freedom to go on strike, and education, culture and human rights were encouraged. As you can see, there were too many individual rights according to the church and the right's view. Nowadays these rights still persist, but whatever is opposed to President Menem and the right's opinion is badly seen. There is a great anti-feminist movement: anti-abortion, no contraceptive methods as well as no divorce and anti-sexual education scientifically oriented at schools and in hospitals are the concepts in fashion. However, the feminist movement is growing larger and larger. At the same time, members of the guerrillas—Montenaros—and military-men have become beneficiaries of a presidential indulgence [*privilege*]. Those who have violated human rights through torture and death are freed. Indeed, the indulgence is a constitutional prerogative of the president, if we consider the trials which started in 1985/7 carried out to judge responsibilities in the repression and during the Falkland Islands War, both occurring in the period of the last dictatorship, the indulgence is merely a mockery of justice and the people. In fact, the first mockery of freedom and life took place when the "End Point Law" was passed, and the second mockery when the parliament passed the "Obedience Due Law"; both during the Alfonsín period. Oh yes! The performance must follow...no matter what happens in the meantime.

I think that's enough by now. We're waiting to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely,  
The Black Orchid  
Grupo Impulso Autogestionario

# The Revolution of Everyday Life



by  
Raoul  
Vaneigem

*The impossibility of communication:  
Power as universal mediation*

**T**<sup>1</sup>he system of commercial exchange has come to govern all of people's everyday relations with themselves and with their fellows. Every aspect of public and private life is dominated by the quantitative.

The merchant in *The Exception and the Rule* confesses: "I don't know what a man is. Only that every man has his price." To the extent that individuals accept Power and enable it to exist, Power in turn judges them by its own yardstick: it reduces and standardizes them. What is the individual to an authoritarian system: a point duly located in its perspective. A point that it recognizes, certainly, but recognizes only in terms of the numbers that define its position in a system of co-ordinates.

The calculation of a man's capacity to produce or to make others produce, to consume or to make others consume, concretizes to a 'T' that expression so dear to our philosophers: *the measure of man*. Even the simple pleasures of a drive in the country are generally measured in terms of miles on the clock, speeds reached and gas consumed. With the rate at which economic 'imperatives' are buying up feelings, desires and needs, and falsifying them, people will soon be left with nothing but the memory of having once been alive. Living in the past: the memory of days gone by will be our consolation for living on. How could spontaneous laughter, let alone real joy, survive in a space-time that is measurable and constantly measured? At best, the dull contentment of the man-who's-got-his-money's-worth, and who exists by that standard. Only objects can be measured, which is why exchange always reifies.

\* \* \*

Any excitement that could still be found in the pursuit of pleasure is fast disintegrating into a panting succession of mechanical gestures, and one hopes in vain that their rhythm will speed up enough to reach even the ambiance of orgasm. The quantitative Eros of speed, novelty and love-against-the-clock disfigures the real face of pleasure everywhere.

The qualitative is slowly taking on the aspect of an infinite quantity, an endless series whose momentary end is always the negation of pleasure. Don Juan's basic "can't get no satisfaction." If only contemporary society would encourage such dissatisfaction, and allow total license to the delirious and devastating attractions of insatiable appetite! Who would deny a certain charm to the life of the idler, a trifle blasé perhaps, but enjoying at his leisure everything that can make passivity sweet: a seraglio of

In the realm of Power, mediation is the falsified necessity wherein people learn to lose themselves rationally. Mediation's power to alienate is now being reinforced, and also brought into question, by the dictatorship of consumption (chapter seven), by the predominance of exchange over gift (chapter eight), by cybernetization (chapter 9), and by the reign of the quantitative (chapter ten).

## Down quantity street

Economic imperatives seek to impose on the whole of human activity the standardized measuring system of the market. Very large quantities take the place of the qualitative, but even quantity is rationed and economized. Myth is based on quality, ideology on quantity. Ideological saturation is an atomization into small contradictory quantities which can no more avoid destroying one another than they can avoid being smashed by the qualitative negativity of popular refusal (1). The quantitative and the linear are indissociable. A linear, measured time and a linear, measured life are the co-ordinates of survival: a succession of interchangeable instants. These lines are part of the confused geometry of Power (2).

beautiful women, witty and sophisticated friends, subtle drugs, exotic meals, brutal liquors and sultry perfumes. This is a man whose desire is not so much to change life as to seek refuge in the greatest attractions it has to offer: a libertine in the grand style.

Realistically, of course, this kind of option no longer exists for *anyone*, for in both Western and Eastern societies even quantity is rationed. A tycoon with only one month left to live would still refuse to blow his entire fortune on one huge orgy...the morality of exchange and profit doesn't let go that easily. Capitalist economics, even if you buy it in a jumbo-size container, still comes down to one thing: niggardliness. What stroke of fortune it was for mystification that it managed for so long to dress up quantity in quality's clothing, to maintain the powerful illusion that a mere *aggregate* of possibilities was the basis of a multidimensional world. This was precisely what the bourgeoisie couldn't do, however: it could not let exchange be subsumed by the gift, nor give free rein between Heaven and Earth to every kind of adventure from Gilles de Rais' to Dante's. This was the door that it closed on itself in the name of industry and commerce. All that remained to it was a vast nostalgia. The bourgeoisie is a wretched yet vital catalyst—at once all and nothing—destined to precipitate the emergence of that classless, non-authoritarian society which will make the illusions of the aristocratic era real.

In the act of faith, the unitary societies of tribal and feudal times possessed a qualitative element of myth and mystification of major importance. The bourgeoisie, once it had shattered the unity of Power and God, found itself

clutching fragments and crumbs of power, crumbs which it tried to clothe with a unitary spirit. But it didn't work. Without unity there can be no qualitative. Democracy triumphs along with social atomization. Democracy is the limited power of the greatest number, and the power of the greatest limited number. The great ideologies very soon abandon faith for numbers. Nowadays the Nation is no more than a few thousand war veterans. And what Marx and Engels used to call "our party" is today a few million voters and a couple of thousand militants: a *mass* party.

In fact, ideology draws its essence from quantity: it is simply an idea reproduced again and again in time (Pavlovian conditioning) and in space (where the consumers take over). Ideology, the media and culture tend more and more to lose their content and become pure quantity. The less importance a piece of news has, the more it is repeated, and the more it distracts people from their real problems. Goebbels said that the bigger the lie, the more easily it is swallowed. But ideology takes us away from the Big Lie by constantly bidding against itself. One after another it lays before us a hundred paperbacks, a hundred washing powders, a hundred political ideas, and with equal conviction proves that each of them is incontestably superior to any of the others. Even in ideology quantity is being destroyed by quantity itself: conflicting conditionings end by canceling each other out. Is this the way to rediscover the power of the qualitative, a power that can move mountains?

Quite the contrary. Contradictory conditioning is more likely to produce trauma, inhibition and a radical refusal

to be brainwashed any more. Admittedly ideology still has one trick up its sleeve—that of posing false questions, raising false dilemmas and leaving the conditioned individual, poor sucker, with the worry of sorting out which is the truer of two lies. But such pointless diversions can do precious little to alleviate the survival sickness to which consumer society exposes its members.

Boredom breeds the irresistible rejection of uniformity, a refusal that can break out at any moment. Stockholm, Amsterdam and Watts (for a start) have shown that the tiniest of pretexts can fire the oil spread on troubled waters. Think of the vast quantity of lies that can be wiped out by one act of revolutionary poetry! From Villa to Lumumba, from Stockholm to Watts, qualitative agitation, the agitation that radicalizes the masses because it springs from the radicalism of the masses, is redefining the frontiers of submission and degradation.

2

In unitary regimes the sacred was the cement that held together the social pyramid in which each particular being, from the highest lord to the lowest serf, had his place according to the will of Providence, the order of the world and the King's pleasure. The cohesion of the structure soon disappeared, dissolved by the corrosive criticism of the youthful bourgeoisie, but, as we know, the shadow of the divine hierarchy remains. The dismantling of the pyramid, far from destroying the inhuman cement, only pulverizes it. We see tiny individual beings becoming absolute: little 'citizens' released by social atomization. The inflated imagination of egocentricity creates a universe on the model of one point, a point just the same as thousands of other points, grains of sand, all free, equal and fraternal, scurrying here and there like so many ants when their nest is broken open.

All the lines have gone haywire since God disappeared, depriving them of their point of convergence; they weave and collide in apparent disorder. But make no mistake, despite the anarchy of competition and the isolation of individualism, class and caste interests are beginning to join up, structuring a geometry able and eager to rival the old divine geometry in coherence. The coherence of unitary power, though based on the divine principle, is a palpable coherence, which each individual lives and knows intimately. Paradoxically the *material* principle of fragmentary power can only furnish an abstract coherence. How could the organization of economic survival hope to substitute itself smoothly for an immanent, an





"Fin de règne, tout baigne...." From *Mordicus* (BP 11, 75622 Paris Cedex 13, France).

omnipresent God who is called on to witness the most trivial gestures, like sitting down to eat or sneezing! The omnipotence of the feudal mode of domination was quite relative anyway, but let us suppose that with the aid of cyberneticians it could be equalled by a secularized government of men. Even so, how could anyone replace the mythic and poetic ethos which enveloped the life of communities that were socially cohesive, an ethos that provided them with some kind of third dimension! The bourgeoisie is well and truly caught in the trap of its own half-revolution.

\* \* \*

Quantification implies linearity. The qualitative is plurivalent, the quantitative univocal. Life quantified becomes a measured route march towards death. The radiant ascent of the soul towards heaven is replaced by inane speculations about the future. Moments of time no longer radiate, as they did in the cyclical time of earlier societies; time is a thread stretching from birth to death, from memories of the past to expectations of the future, on which an eternity of survival strings out a row of instants and hybrid presents nibbled away by what is past and what is yet to come. The feeling of living in symbiosis with cosmic forces—the sense of the simultaneous—revealed joys to our forefathers which our passing presence in the world is hard put to it to provide. What remains of such a joy! Only vertigo, giddy transience, the effort of keeping up with

the times. You must move with the times—the motto of those who make a profit if you do.

*"Life quantified becomes a measured route march towards death. The radiant ascent of the soul towards heaven is replaced by inane speculations about the future. Moments of time no longer radiate, as they did in the cyclical time of earlier societies...."*

Not that we should lament the passing of the old days of cyclical time, the time of mystical effusion. Rather correct it: center it in man, and not in the divine animal. Man is not now the center of time, he is merely a point in it. Time is composed of a succession of points, each taken independently of the others like an absolute, but an absolute endlessly repeated and rehashed. Because they are located on the same line, all actions and all moments assume equal importance. The prosaic epitomized. Down quantity street, everything is much of a muchness. And these absolutized fragments are all quite interchangeable. Divided from one another—and thus separated from man himself—the moments of survival follow one another and resemble one another just like the specialized attitudes that correspond to them: roles. Making love or

riding a motorcycle, it's all the same. Each moment has its stereotype, and fragments of time carry off fragments of men into a past that can never be changed.

What's the use of threading pearls to make a garland of memories! If only the weight of the pearls would snap the thread! But no: moment by moment, time bores on; everything is lost, nothing created....

What do I want? Not a succession of moments, but one huge instant. A totality that is lived, and without the experience of "time passing." The feeling of "time passing" is simply the feeling of growing old. And yet, since one must survive in order to live, virtual moments; possibilities, are necessarily rooted in that time. When we try to federate moments, to bring out the pleasure in them, to release their promise of life, we are already learning how to construct 'situations'.

\* \* \*

Individual survival-lines cross, collide and intersect. Each one puts limits on the freedom of others; projects cancel one another out in the name of their autonomy. This is the basis of the geometry of fragmentary power.

We think we are living in the world, when in fact we are being positioned in a perspective. No longer the simultaneous perspective of primitive painters, but the perspective of the Renaissance rationalists. It is hardly possible for looks, thoughts and gestures to escape

the attraction of the distant vanishing point which orders and deforms them, situating them in its spectacle. Power is the great city planner. It parcels out public and private survival, buys up vacant lots cheap, and only permits construction that complies with its regulations. Its own construction plans are aimed at expropriating the shirt off everyone's back. Its monolithic style is the envy of its builders of actual 'cities', who emulate it as best they can as they replace the old mumbo-jumbo architecture of the sacred hierarchy with stock-broker belts, white-collar high-rise 'communities' and workers' projects.

The reconstruction of life, the rebuilding of the world: one and the same desire.

## Death of an anarchist

*Continued from page 13*

the area who had suffered a lot themselves from the police.

After a long time at large, someone recognized him and informed the police. So, he was returned to prison again.

For a second time, then just 20 years old, he accomplished an astonishing escape from Siggrou Hospital though he was chain-bound and among six cops. They shot him, but he jumped onto a motorcycle and got away. Again he was an outlaw and on the run.

Again someone betrayed him, and during the chase by the police some bricklayers from a nearby cafe caught him. They beat him up, and being ignorant of who he was and what he has done, they gave him to the cops.

He was tortured again in police offices as well as in the jail. They punished him for his escape and the humiliation they felt from it.

He received 18 years imprisonment, charged with thefts whether he committed them or not, according to other people's confessions extorted with tortures.

His hatred against society and its hired guards was enormous. He spent most of his imprisonment in disciplinary prisons like Kori-dallos, Egina, and Patra. He felt like a trapped animal. By the time he realized that, he has to change his conduct. He wanted out of prison at all costs, of course without losing his dignity. So, he began engraving copper plates, making pictures with beads, working on various handicrafts while he learned to play the guitar, and he started reading lots of books.

Meanwhile, the movement against prisons was then in progress. He regarded the people in the movement outside the prisons as his comrades. He spent six years in prison before he was at last released, because his papers for "provisional release" had been rejected many times over the previous year.

When he got out of prison, he found work in a motorcycle garage. But even then, they wouldn't let him lead a quiet life. His past was always a blameworthy factor. They blamed him for motorcycle thefts. Those accusing him of stealing their motorcycles knew very well that he didn't do it, but since he refused to name the thief, even though he didn't know who it was, he was charged with the thefts.

Understanding that his past proved his guilt, he didn't even appear in court and the judgement by default was 2½ years imprisonment; the Public Prosecutor proposed 2 years while the court decided for 2½ because of his past!

For the last time he was outlawed. He tried to hide. During a chase in Galatsi in March, 1990 police shot him with machine guns. Though he was unarmed he managed to slip away. He found a house where he lived with his companion, E. Voyiatzi, and their new-born baby. They followed him in his troubles and so they also incurred the authorities' hatred.

He disappeared again and it enraged the cops. He humiliated them once again.

The last time they trapped him, he challenged them, standing erect with his guns in hand. They caught his dying body but they didn't manage to catch his soul, to tear it off.

"Come on, you bastards, shoot me now." Michalis the 'Caprola' managed to escape and humiliate them one last time.

*This text is from the Union of Greek Anarchists (POB 26050, Athens 10022, Greece).*

# Beyond FEMINISM:

## Anarchism and Human Freedom

By L. Susan Brown

**F**ew would quarrel with the statement that social changes resulting from feminist struggle have been nothing short of profound. These changes have been brought about by the effort of women belonging to the "first wave" of feminism in the early 1900s and, more recently, by the "second wave" of women's struggle that emerged in the 1960s and continues to this day. It is hard to think of even one aspect of our lives that has not been touched in some way by the women's movement. We need only to look at the lives of our own mothers to see how much things have changed in the last 20 years. The restrictions that my mother faced first as a girl and then as a woman in the 1940s and 1950s have been largely overcome by women who fought against the confines of sexism. Today, women are by and large recognized as legitimate citizens of our society and are seen by most as valuable members of the community in their own right.

Women's fight for legitimacy has not been easy. It has been met with great resistance, not only by men, but also by some women. The fact that men as a group have resisted women's emancipation led to the establishment of a separate women's movement. If we look back to the 1960s, for example, we can see that the sexism within the New Left forced women to look elsewhere for satisfying political involvement.<sup>1</sup> As Angela Miles notes:

*"The ringing statements of early feminist manifestos as well as subsequent analyses of the period show clearly that feminists left male dominated groups, not from weakness but from positions of strength and experience, to carry forward a struggle for a cultural, economic, social and sexual revolution that had faltered on men's refusal to address their own power over women."<sup>2</sup>*

The humanism of the New Left, like the ideology of mainstream society, was male-defined. The contradiction was great—Marxists, anarchists, Trotskyists, Maoists, and others were all ostensibly fighting for human liberation, but they undertook this fight without confronting sexism. The New Left simply did not take women as women seriously. These movements drove women out of the left because the fundamental conception of the human being within the left was overwhelmingly male. Issues like women's sexual and intellectual freedom, child care, housework, violence against women and children, sexual harassment, and the objectification of women were not addressed in any serious way by the male left. Left politics was on the whole more concerned with the theory and practice of toppling governments or seizing power than with looking after children. This is not to say that left-wing politics accomplished nothing



Emma Goldman. Drawing by Tony Doyle (POB 8062, Columbus, OH. 43201).

*"The right to vote, or equal civil rights, may be good demands, but true emancipation begins neither at the polls nor in courts. It begins in woman's soul. History tells us that every oppressed class gained true liberation from its masters through its own efforts. It is necessary that woman learn that lesson, that she realize that her freedom will reach as far as her power to achieve her freedom reaches."* -Emma Goldman

during the 1960s; in fact, the left was responsible for a critical reevaluation of late capitalism which shook the very foundations of our society. The movement, at once playful and deadly serious, challenged the authority of the State to send men to war, challenged the authority of the capitalist to steal from workers, and challenged the right of the church to control sexuality. What it did not challenge was the right of men to exercise power over 'their' women. On the whole, left-wing men did not question their own dubious right to define the human race in their own image—as male. As a result, a women's movement emerged not only in opposition to the sexism of the dominant culture, but also in response to the lack of a nonsexist and thereby truly humanist left.

The struggle by women for liberation has emerged out of a myriad of contexts and situations, both personal and political. Some women came to feminism through left-wing politics: Marxism, anarchism or socialism, for exam-

ple. Other women embraced feminism because, trapped in suburban kitchens, they confronted and overcame what in 1963 Betty Friedan called "the problem that has no name"<sup>3</sup> by giving it a name: male domination. Still others found themselves involved in the women's movement because it allowed an alternative to heterosexuality. There are probably as many reasons for joining the women's movement as there are women. This has resulted in a wonderfully diverse collection of groups and tendencies within the feminist movement. Among others, these include Marxist-feminists, socialist feminists, radical feminists, lesbian separatists, anarchy-feminists, integrative feminists, liberal feminists and eco-feminists. Not only do these various groups differ from one another, but even within groups there exist subtle and not-so-subtle differences and factions. This fluid ever-changing pluralism, which resists rigid categorization, is one of the movement's strengths, while simultaneously posing challenging analytical problems for

theorists concerned with understanding the feminist movement. Therefore, instead of becoming mired in a tiring and unrewarding discussion of what divides the women's movement, it is more useful to identify what these various groups have in common. What unites these women as feminists is their shared belief that women in our society are unfairly disadvantaged relative to men. While there is much disagreement over the causes, all feminists are united in their refusal to accept women's subordination as unchangeable.

This refusal has had enormous effects on the practice of politics in our society. Marxists, socialists, liberals, even mainstream politicians must now in some way or other address the concerns put forth by feminists. While some of the changes have been symbolic, like the decreasing use of sexist language in public, other changes such as the increased availability of birth control and abortion have been undeniably concrete. These changes are due to the militancy of the women's movement over the past 20 years, a militancy that has demonstrated very clearly that if men do not treat women as full members of the human species, we will simply go elsewhere. And go elsewhere we did—into our consciousness-raising groups, our women-only study sessions, our feminist action committees, our autonomous, self-run women's movement.

This creation by women of a movement for women provided the opportunity for many of us to be taken seriously for the first time in our lives. Instead of fighting with left-wing men to put child care on the agenda, we wrote the agenda ourselves. This, I believe, is the most important achievement of the women's movement—women did not ask for freedom, we took it. As Emma Goldman boldly wrote:

*"The right to vote, or equal civil rights, may be good demands, but true emancipation begins neither at the polls nor in courts. It begins in woman's soul. History tells us that every oppressed class gained true liberation from its masters through its own efforts. It is necessary that woman learn that lesson, that she realize that her freedom will reach as far as her power to achieve her freedom reaches."<sup>4</sup>*

The feminist movement has indeed freed "woman's soul," certainly within the movement itself. That this achievement has permeated the rest of the left, and to a lesser extent mainstream society, is a testament to the vitality and strength of women's struggle.

While acknowledging these accomplishments, I would like to turn now to what I see as an inherent limitation of the feminist movement: the lack of an intrinsic critique of power and domination *per se*. The absence of such a critique in the core of feminist thought results in the inability of feminism as a whole either to envision or to create a



world where all people can be free. I would like to suggest that the political philosophy of anarchism, with its implicit critique of power, offers an alternative to feminism in the ongoing struggle for human liberation.

To speak of power as a thing or phenomenon that can exist independent of human consciousness is to profoundly misunderstand the whole problem of power itself. Power exists as a relationship between individual human beings whereby one individual attempts to negate the free will of another. When the will of one has been successfully imposed upon another, then there exists a situation of domination. That power is a relationship between two parties—the oppressor and the oppressed—and not something metaphysical or otherwise beyond the grasp and control of human individuals, is clearly understood by anarchist thinkers.

In the early part of this century, Emma Goldman quoted these lines from John Henry Mackay's poem in her essay "Anarchism: What It Really Stands For":

"I am an Anarchist! Wherefore I will Not rule, and also ruled I will not be!"<sup>6</sup>

These words clearly and succinctly express the integrity that is fundamental to the anarchist position—integrity born out of the double imperative to both denounce and renounce the exercise of power. Anarchist political philosophy is based upon the belief that people are capable of self-determination, that self-determination is the foundation for human freedom, and that power relationships undermine self-determination and therefore must be constantly opposed. This uncompromising anti-authoritarianism is what makes anarchism so compelling to its adherents, both as a philosophy and as a political movement. Anarchists understand that freedom is grounded in the refusal of the individual to exercise power over others coupled with the opposition of the individual to restrictions by any external authority. Thus, anarchists challenge any form of organization or relationship which fosters the exercise of power and domination. For instance, anarchists oppose the State because the act of governing depends upon the exercise of power, whether it be of monarchs over their subjects or, as in the case of a democracy, of the majority over the minority. Anarchists also rally against the institution of organized religion, which they regard as both implicitly and explicitly engendering relations of hierarchy and domination. Compulsory education, sexual repression, censorship, private property, alienated labor, child abuse—all these are relationships of power that anarchists critically challenge.

Of course, many expressions of power exist in our society other than those I have just listed; what distinguishes the anarchist from other political activists is that the anarchist opposes them all. This condemnation of power *per se* is fundamental to the anarchist position and gives it a critical impetus that takes it beyond traditional political movements. The feminist movement, with its central concern the liberation of women, does not contain within itself the larger critique of power that is basic to anarchism. What I hope to demonstrate below is that without an implicit condemnation of power *as such*, feminism ultimately fails by limiting itself to an incomplete struggle for liberation.

In my view, it is absolutely necessary

that an explicitly anti-authoritarianism be present in a political philosophy if it is to bring about true human liberation. No hierarchy is acceptable, no ruler is allowable, no domination is justifiable in a free society. Clearly, if this anti-authoritarian principle is not fundamental to a political philosophy, then domination and hierarchy can exist in theory and practice without presenting a crisis. As a movement, feminism does not have as a defining characteristic an anti-authoritarian critique of power and domination; therefore, as a political philosophy, it is insufficient for the liberation of all people.

Of course it is possible to point to various groups and individuals within feminism who are critical of power, domination, and hierarchy. The feminist writer Marilyn French, for instance, criticizes power in her book *Beyond Power: On Women, Men and Morals* and advocates building a new world on what she argues is the opposite of power—pleasure.<sup>6</sup> Another feminist writer, Starhawk, likewise criticizes the exercise of what she calls "power-over" and advocates the use of consensus decision-making as one means to counter power.<sup>7</sup> Angela Miles, in her essay "Feminist Radicalism in the 1980s," argues for an 'integrative' feminism that opposes all forms of domination.<sup>8</sup> These are only three examples of feminist thinkers who consciously oppose the exercise of power and domination; there exist many others.

However, while one can point to examples of feminist thought that focus on the problem of power, this does not indicate in any sense that a critique of power is necessary or integral to feminist theory taken as a whole. In other words, just as one can be a feminist and oppose power like the three writers cited above, it is also possible and not inconsistent for a feminist to embrace the use of power and advocate domination without relinquishing the right to be a feminist. For example, in her essay "The Future—If There Is One—Is Female," Sally Miller Gearhart argues for the establishment of a matriarchy; she says we must "begin thinking of flipping the coin, of making the exchange of power, of building the ideology of female primacy and control."<sup>9</sup> A matriarchy, like a patriarchy, is based on power; the fact that in a matriarchy women hold the power does not negate the fact that power is still being exercised. Jo Freeman, in her article "The Tyranny of Structurelessness," argues that feminists must abandon their small leaderless groups in favor of delegated power and a strong, centralized feminist organization.<sup>10</sup> In place of small grassroots groups that use consensus to make decisions, Freeman advocates large-scale democratic decision-making, without questioning the tyranny of the majority over the minority that is inevitable in any democratic form of organization. For Freeman, if feminism is to be successful, then "some middle ground between domination and ineffectiveness can and must be found."<sup>11</sup> Clearly, Freeman sees nothing wrong with women participating in forms of politics which are based on the exercise of domination and power. Betty Friedan, feminist author of *The Feminine Mystique* and *The Second Stage*, argues in both books that the struggle for and the achievement of women's equality should take place without disturbing the existing hierarchies of the State and the capitalist economic system.<sup>12</sup> Friedan

has no quarrel with economic or political power—she simply wants men and women to be able to compete for power on an equal footing. Gearhart, Freeman, Friedan—all three are undeniably feminist, and all three accept power as part of their world view. This acceptance of power does not in any way disqualify them from being feminists. Feminism may allow for a critique of power, but a critique of power is not necessary to feminism.

In spite of the fact that some feminists clearly embrace the use of power, the argument has been made by certain theorists that feminism is inherently anarchistic. For instance, Lynne Farrow takes this position when she claims that "Feminism practices what Anarchism preaches."<sup>13</sup> Peggy Kornegger also asserts an identity between the two movements when she states, "Feminists have been unconscious anarchists for years."<sup>14</sup> Both Farrow and Kornegger, in their enthusiasm to link feminism with anarchism, ignore groups and individuals within the women's movement who are decidedly 'archic', that is, who endorse the use of power in both theory and practice. By collapsing anarchism and feminism into one movement, Kornegger and Farrow disregard the rich diversity of perspectives that make up the feminist movement, at the same time committing a grave injustice to anarchism by rendering it redundant. If "Feminism practices what Anarchism preaches," who needs anarchism anyway? In fact, feminism and anarchism are not identical movements as Farrow and Kornegger suggest; feminism as a whole recognizes the iniquity of the oppression of women by men; anarchism opposes oppression of all kinds. Certainly some feminists look beyond sexism to a wider, anarchistic critique of power; however, this wider critique is not at all necessary to feminism.

Since it is possible, and in fact quite likely, that one could be a feminist without sharing the anarchist sensibility towards power, then it is logical to ask whether it is possible to be an anarchist without being a feminist. In other words, can anarchism accommodate the oppression of women without contradicting itself? As anarchism is a political philosophy that opposes *all* relationships of power, it is inherently feminist. An anarchist who supports male domination contradicts the implicit critique of power which is the fundamental principle upon which all of anarchism is built. Sexist anarchists do indeed exist, but only by virtue of directly contradicting their own anarchism. This contradiction leaves sexist anarchists open to criticism on their own terms. Anarchism must be feminist if it is to remain self-consistent.

Not only is anarchism inherently feminist, but also it goes beyond feminism in its fundamental opposition to all forms of power, hierarchy, and domination. Anarchism transcends and contains feminism in its critique of power. This implicit opposition to the exercise of power gives anarchism a wider mandate, so to speak, than feminism or other liberatory movements such as Marxism. Anarchist political philosophy and practice is free to critically oppose any situation of oppression. While race, class, age, gender, sexuality, or ability, for instance, may pose analytic problems for other movements, anarchism is capable of dealing with all these issues as legitimate because of its fundamental commitment to freedom

for *all* people. No one oppression is given special status in anarchism—all oppression is equally undesirable. Anarchism fights for human freedom against each and every form of power and domination, not just a particular historical manifestation of power. This gives anarchism a flexibility not available to other movements. Not only can anarchism address any form of oppression that exists today, it is versatile enough to be able to respond to any form of oppression that may emerge in the future. If tomorrow, for instance, left-handed people were proclaimed to be criminals for their lack of right-handedness, anarchists would have to oppose such oppression in order to remain true to anarchism's underlying anti-authoritarian principles. It is this fundamental anti-authoritarianism that leads anarchists to fight for the dignity and freedom of such groups as women, people of color, gays and lesbians, people with AIDS, the differently abled, the poor, and the homeless, among others. Anarchism goes beyond other liberatory movements in opposing oppression in whatever form it takes, without assigning priority to one oppression over another.

Unlike most other political movements, anarchism understands that all oppressions are mutually reinforcing; therefore it urges that the liberation struggle take place on many fronts at once. Thus some anarchists concentrate on challenging State power, others focus on opposing male domination, and still others spend their energy fighting against capitalist exploitation, compulsory heterosexuality, organized religion, and a myriad of other causes. The anarchist movement accommodates a diversity of anti-authoritarian struggles, and while each is recognized as being essential to the establishment of a truly free society, none is placed as prior to or more important than the others. Anarchism fights all oppression in all its forms.

Anarchism goes beyond feminism, indeed beyond most other liberatory movements, in its relentless quest for human freedom. Certainly there are people working within other movements who share anarchism's aversion to power; however, any political movement that does not have at its core an anti-authoritarian critique of power leaves itself open to anarchist questioning. The gift of anarchism lies in this critique—a thoughtful but relentless questioning of authority and power, one which seeks to create a world where all may live in freedom.

*This essay is reprinted with permission from Our Generation (3981 boul. St-Laurent, Suite 444, Montréal, Québec, H2W 1Y5, Canada) Vol.21, #1/Fall '89.*

## Endnotes

1) See, for instance, Angela Miles, *Feminist Radicalism in the 1980s*. Montreal: Culturetexts, 1985, pp. 4-5; and Janet Biehl, "What is Social Ecofeminism?" in *Green Perspectives: A Left Green Publication*, Number 11, October 1988, p. 5.

2) Miles, "Feminist Radicalism," p. 5

3) Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: Dell, 1974, p. 11.

4) Emma Goldman, *Anarchism and Other Essays*. New York: Dover, 1969, p. 224.

5) John Henry Mackay, quoted in *Anarchism and Other Essays* by Emma Goldman. New York: Dover, 1969, p. 47.

6) Marilyn French, *Beyond Power: On Women, Men and Morals*. New York: Summit, 1985, pp. 539-540.

7) Starhawk, *Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex and Politics*. Boston: Beacon, 1982, pp. 110-111.

8) Miles, "Radical Feminism," p. 5.

# THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT and the **Reaction** Against It

*A Critique by Laure Akai*

**T**here is no homogenous women's movement. Right away my title has created a certain ambiguity and rightly so; people have different ideas about what the "women's movement" actually is, not only because of the mental perceptions that are carried over into their conceptions of it, but also because of the ideologies they've met which have claimed to be part of the women's movement.

Feminists can range from the Helen Gurly Browns to the Andrea Dworkins. Trying to redesign feminism to echo your ideological sentiments is of little help; in the end the problems that women face in the world are bigger than what feminism can accomplish because feminism is only a movement of women's liberation, not of human liberation.

Women have for a long time been suffering various problems stemming from gender based bias. The feminist movement was obviously created to help encourage women to fight against this and therefore its parameters are more or less set to encompass only these struggles. (There may be, say, feminist ecologists, but the ecology is a human issue, and as it is removed from the sphere of gender bias, it cannot fall under the rubric of a feminist issue.) This is probably the least of its weak points.

Feminism is a national liberation movement. Like politically defined national liberation movements, the oppressor is named and the fight is to free the nation (in this case the nation of sisterhood) from its domination. There are obvious problems that arise from this and perhaps it would be best to list them categorically.

1) The idea of homogenous groups of people bearing the same characteristics (and not grouped *because* of them) is a falsehood.

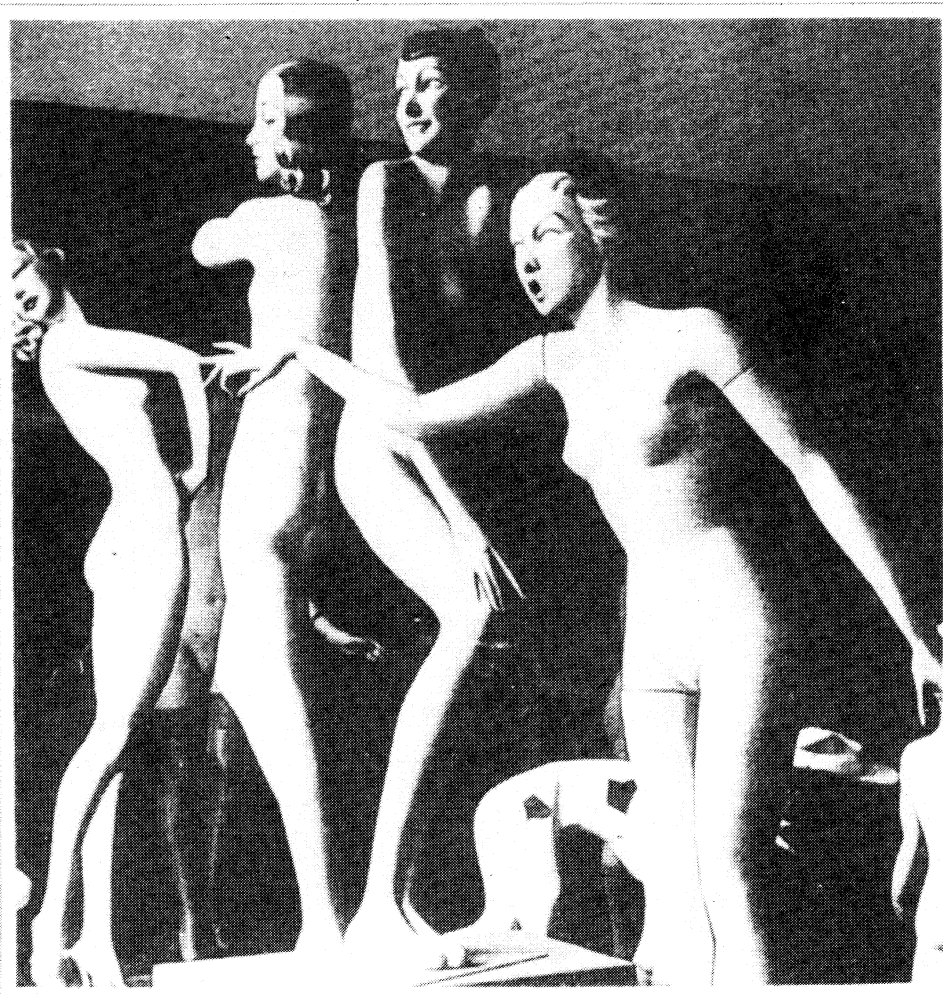
2) Bearing this in mind, we obviously cannot categorically place people into groups as oppressor and oppressed simply on the basis of their gender.

3) Once we realize that gender bias is encultured we must admit that we are all potential recipients of this enculturation. If we are to assess that different people will react to this in different ways, we will come to the conclusion that some people will embody this to different degrees and others will not. Any woman or man can uphold the status quo or ignore it.

4) Tactics are an issue as separatists exist, offering ideas contrary to mainstream feminism. Separatism has given up on appealing to men as a sensitive portion of our population. Exclusion of men regardless of their mentalities is unfair to men. The tactics of the feminist movement tend to exclude rather than include men in the process of liberation. Inclusions of men tend to be in the form of accusations in hopes of admissions of guilt, changes of behaviour. (This rarely helps men as many of their problems with themselves, enculturation and other situations go ignored. This often recreates resentment.)

5) Only the most broad issues could be agreed upon in forming a front against oppression.

This doesn't even take into account the fact that women (as well as men) will have to live under hundreds of



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other forms of domination not even remotely related to gender.

Criticism of feminism also varies. There is criticism that comes from fearful men whose sexist behaviour is threatened to be brought under scrutiny. There are women who have made a successful career for themselves out of being doormats. But there are also criticisms of tendencies in feminist discourse/behaviour that were born in opposition to sex roles. As it would be hard for anybody to accuse me of blindness towards sexism, many people have said for a long time that I should be the one to make this critique.

I think it's shitty that a few of my male friends who have the same opinions are too afraid to express them to any 'feminist' out of fear of being called closet women haters. They may well know that they aren't but might be condemned as such because they have a penis between their legs. Part of the problem in feminist circles is to categorically refuse to listen to the objections of men, even when there is some intelligence to them (which does rarely occur), just because they are men.

As I noted before, we are all potential victims of enculturation. Women however are not strongly criticized by other women for succumbing to this enculturation. The same understanding is not afforded to men. (I am not speaking about sexism in the most overt

forms of domination.)

Although I am not now nor have ever been a man I feel that I know enough about some problems males face that I can address a few. The sex roles placed on men are also stringent. "Male privilege" certainly does not belong to *every* male, and many males find themselves in a position where they feel inadequate. The way that males compensate for this is sometimes more hateful towards women, sometimes not.

Women camouflage their hatred of men and often categorically deny it. Although the typical male exaggerates his vision of the woman seeking power over him—the one that plays mind games, manipulates, uses him, etc.—this does exist and is as equally painful to a man (or another woman) when it happens as when a man does these things to a woman. The tactics are often the same—ranging from withdrawal of affection to verbal abuse, from feeding on someone's insecurities to sexual objectification. This cannot be talked about by feminists because it weakens their clear cut boundaries of who is biologically determined victim and who is oppressor.

Too much of feminist ideology is based in victimization. The victim always has the moral upper hand so once a person becomes a victim it is morally decrepit to suggest that the victim did anything to lend to her/his victimiza-

tion. With the notion of 'victim' is almost always associated the notion of 'innocent'.

Finally, much of what is forgiven in relations between women and in behaviour of women towards men is misconstrued when men do it. Often this is because there are different conceptions of what is sexist. For example, if I were to say (in the company of men or women) that I would like to get into some guy's pants, the reaction would not be the same as if a man said this of a woman. Some sexual remarks about women are thought to be degrading only because society views sex as a degrading experience for women.

Insensitivity is not gender exclusive.

As I wrote earlier, much criticism of feminism is brought out by women haters. I find it interesting to listen to these people. Many people I've known who have exhibited misogynistic behaviour were actually men whose psyches were so dependent on the approval of women that when they didn't receive it they exerted their anger instead of internalizing it. Unfortunately, the situation is not that clear cut. Most men (at least where I live, anyway) are not outright women-haters. In fact, most men act in a manner which is consistent with how women think of women.

Sisterhood is not simply undermined by competition for the man. Sisterhood is undermined by the fact that people can have wildly different characters.

Without getting sidetracked (which I could do by discussing why many people are actually happy with the status quo), I'd like to say that when I hear the mildly sexist man with some complaint about a woman, I generally feel uncomfortable about how they present the complaint. I am actually interested in some of these stories, even if only to get a clue as to what bothers men, but when people start accusing all women of the same behaviour as one, I get angry. I often think men must feel the same way when put in that situation.

Then again, if the man starts crying and playing the innocent victim people will feel sorry for him. I guess what they say is true: it's all in the delivery.

This is the part where I could go on with a trite little prescription about how we are all interconnected and need to heal each other. Although it's been said many times, there is some sense to that message.

I am a little hesitant about making this critique in these politically conservative times. In no way am I excusing any male person of awful sexist behaviour (if he is guilty of it). But if behaviour is to be scrutinized, it must be done so from all around. Necessarily some defensive men will like my criticism because to them it's all a tit for tat guilt allotment, and the more guilt attached to the actions of women, the better. Fear of giving these defensive people *de facto* corroboration however did not hold me back from saying what I had to say; they would continue on without me. This critique was meant as an introduction to the discussion of improving the equilibrium between men and women. Readers are encouraged to make further observations and comments.



It has become normal for people in these debates to begin by criticizing the title of the debate—and I won't be the first to break this tradition.

What I take exception to in the title is the word 'disarmed' because I don't believe feminism was ever armed in the first place. It always was, is now, and will remain, 'unarmed.' The demands of the women's movement have never had revolutionary implications; they never posed threats to either the state or capitalist society and therefore it is a mistake to think of it as a once revolutionary force now diluted by reformism.

It is precisely because of the women's movement rationale itself that it could never be revolutionary. Its professed aim has been to put women on an equal footing with men, to explain oppression in terms of sex instead of class. This analysis was wrong on both counts.

By presupposing that men, as a sex, call all the shots and are more privileged in all respects, feminists risk losing sight of the fact that men in this society are subject to discrimination and oppression based on class. The desire to be equal to men seems ridiculous to me, for who would want to be equal to slaves?

Of course many feminists recognize this and try to get around it by claiming that women's demands, if implemented, would revolutionize society. They say that once a deep and thorough-going realignment of the sexes takes place, once the psychological barriers which divide men from women are removed, society in its present form would be radically altered. Patriarchy, so the argument runs, is the source of oppression, preceding the development of classes and capitalism; and the consequence of its demise would be a free and equal society.

The second mistake is to treat 'freedom' as quantitative. Human freedom is not divisible, degrees of oppression are not real criteria with which to analyze society. It is immaterial whether patriarchy preceded class development. Oppression is based on class and I believe that the men and women of one class must unite and fight the men and women of the ruling class. To say, as Astrid Proll did, that she knew she could get justice because the judge hearing her case was a woman, is dangerous. It is dangerous because it promotes a myth—the myth of sisterhood. As if all women, despite their class, have something fundamentally in common, because they share the same kind of sex organs.

The myth of sisterhood works against revolutionaries in two ways. It separates men from women. You all know of "women only" meetings. Surely our concern is to bring people together not to erect still more barriers. The "woman is superior" syndrome is not something I am exaggerating for tonight—it is plainly visible in *Spare Rib* among the contributors who state that they hate their male children—at six months old! It's horrendous. The worst aspect of the "myth of sisterhood" is that it leads directly to women's issues alone and undermines the solidarity so important to a revolutionary movement and neglects a class analysis. Thus women's demands have been channeled into projects like the First Women's National Bank of New York, which allows men to have accounts but not to be-

come shareholders. The logic behind this seems to be that self-managed oppression and exploitation is better. It also indicates the identification of women's rights with women careerists and professionals. There is no demand for revolution—just a demand that within the framework of this economic and social system women get a fair deal. Big deal!

Of course it is true that within the women's movement there are those women who call themselves revolutionaries, whose rationale appears to be that they recognize that women will never achieve anything other than superficial equality unless society undergoes a revolutionary change. They say however that they prefer to work with women only, because they feel dominated among men. I can understand that to a point but no problem was ever solved by ignoring it. If some men are domineering toward women they should be confronted by the fact—it's no use going away and hoping that in your absence that man or men in question will come to their senses. Anyway some women feel dominated by other women—what do they do then? Form a subgroup of submissive women only?

Some women use the 'degrees' of oppression argument as an explanation

for their work in the women's movement. The point of the argument being that you should work with the most oppressed. For example Kate Millet says that in the United States white women are more oppressed than black males. I'm not sure how points are allocated but I suppose that a black working class unmarried mother who's a lesbian must get the highest score.

Demands for free abortion, better day care facilities and so on are important only in so far as they make life today that much easier—in much the same way as demands for prison reform in the way of more association, longer visits and the like, makes prison life a little easier. But these reforms should be left to the liberals; they don't come to grips with the basic problem in society. For women who feel themselves to be revolutionaries it is more important that they see past these reforms and concern themselves with more fundamental issues. When someone says "I'm an anarchist feminist" to me that's like saying "I'm a vegetarian who doesn't eat meat." To me anarchism stands for the individual liberation of each human being.

For the reasons I've given I don't believe feminism was ever 'armed' in the sense that it ever provided a revolu-

tionary challenge to the state. But is it also 'introverted' and 'indulgent'? Briefly then:

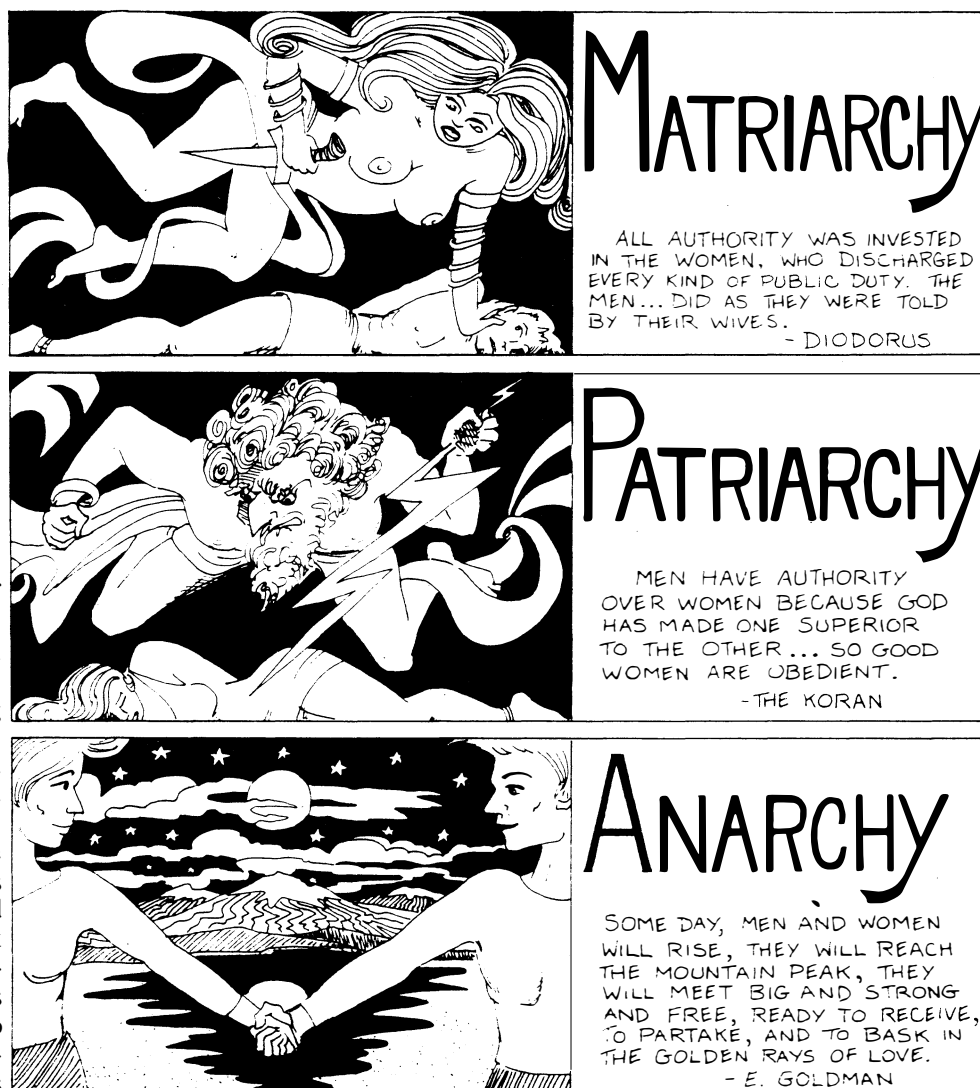
A glance at some of the feminist fiction around is, I think, a fair indication of the concerns of the women's movement. Pick, say, Marge Piercy's books, *Woman on the Edge of Time* and *Vida*. It seems odd that feminists who are allegedly concerned with destroying the current sexual stereotypes are setting up new ones, and have books full of 'beautiful' people. Piercy's heroines are all very physically attractive to men. Moreover the men themselves conform to the same old model: handsome, strong, and athletic. Indeed in *Vida* it is the slightly feminine man who betrays the heroine.

Also, for some ridiculous reason, cats play an important role—they supposedly represent the female image. Is that supposed to be soft and fluffy? While dogs are despised, the reason for which I haven't yet grasped, but apparently dogs are more masculine.

I think that this type of fiction which reflects feminist issues shows them to be introverted and indulgent in the same way as conferences on orgasm are. By all means talk about these things with your friends, male and female—or with strangers if you will. But don't try to give them a political expression or use them as examples of political oppression of women by men.

Finally, I want to acknowledge some benefit from the feminist movement—simply that it has done something to change the nature of relationships between men and women; with developments in technology that give us effective contraception, for example, relationships were bound to evolve. But anarchists have to go further—it is not possible to have 'free' relationships in an unfree society. We can work towards it, true, but we can never obtain it until we have a free society in which to develop properly. I maintain that human beings and human relationships cannot be free until the oppression of the state and capital is destroyed and a classless society is created. Nothing less will do.

From *Against Separatism*, edited by Joe Peacock. Available from B.A.D. (P.O. Box 1323, Cambridge, MA. 02238). Iris Mills is an anarchist who spent over a year and a half in jail as one of those accused of conspiring to cause explosions in the "Persons Unknown" case in England. She was subsequently found not guilty of the charges.



By Wendy S. Duke (POB 80044, Akron, OH. 44308). This comic appeared previously in *The Match!*

## Beyond FEMINISM

### Endnotes

Continued from page 17

9) Sally Miller Gearhart, "The Future—If There Is One—Is Female," in Pam McAllister, editor. *Rewaving the Web of Life: Feminism and Nonviolence*. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1982. p. 270.

10) Jo Freeman, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness," in *Unyng the Knot: Feminism, Anarchism and Organisation*. Montreal: BOA, 1986. Bevy of Anarchist/Feminists. P.O. Box 988, Station Desjardins, Montreal, Quebec. H5B 1C1.

11) Freeman, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness," p. 14.

12) See Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, especially pp. 330, 337-339; and Betty Friedan, *The Second Stage*. New York: Summit, 1981, especially pp. 262, 324, 339.

13) Lynne Farrow, *Feminism as Anarchism*. Montreal: BOA, 1988. p. 1.

14) Peggy Kornegger, "Anarchism: The Feminist Connection," in *The Second Wave*. Spring, 1975. p. 31.

# ANARCHISM and GENDER

## Sexual Orientation Politics

By Liz A. Highleyman

### Identity Politics and Labels

A great deal of today's political organizing, especially within the left, is based on identity politics, that is, on the classes or groups people feel a part of and ally themselves with. Labels are the vocabulary of identity politics. At the same time, an opposing tendency sees labeling as a bad thing; we should interact with people as individuals and treat everyone the same without regard to characteristics such as gender, race, and sexuality. Unfortunately, even though we'd like to achieve an egalitarian society, it is clear that it does not exist now, and that white people, men, and heterosexuals hold the most power in this society, not due to coincidence or superior ability, but because of systematic oppression based on inherent group-based characteristics (sexuality may or may not be inherent, but is often treated as if it were). Several traditions, including classical liberalism, libertarianism, and some brands of conservatism belittle identity politics, as can be seen in the current wars over "political correctness."

There is debate among anarchists regarding the usefulness of a politics based on categorization. Some believe that schemes of classification that allow us to view a person primarily as a member of a group rather than as an individual (and thus as a recipient of the stereotypes associated with that group) are detrimental to the ideal of viewing everyone as an individual. Others find such categorization beneficial because it can allow members of marginalized groups to find solidarity and to celebrate and reclaim their group identity as a positive rather than negative feature. Through the strength of the group as a united entity, they may find it easier to resist oppression. While it may be possible to rid ourselves of classification schemes when all people are free and equal, in the meantime the ability to proudly claim and find strength in a group identity can be an important means of self-empowerment, and can be a valuable tool in the struggle for liberation.

### Why do we Categorize?

It is a common human trait to sort people and things into categories and to give those categories labels (e.g., male and female, homosexual and heterosexual, progressive and conservative). This tendency to classify is a natural part of the human cognitive process; we are constantly bombarded with so much input that we must have some way to organize it in order to understand our experience. Most of us, for example, have felt the confusion that results



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when we encounter someone who we cannot immediately classify as male or female. This tendency is reinforced by society; we are taught to think in a categorical way, and focusing on divisions helps to keep that powers-that-be in power. As natural as it is, categorization also presents a danger. The categories we construct may be overly confining or resistant to change, and the labels we use may be degrading or judgmental. Categories and labels can be useful tools, but we should regard them as tools only, and not as ends in themselves. We shouldn't be afraid to revise or abolish a classification scheme or a set of labels that has become more harmful than it is beneficial.

One of the most common features of the classification systems our society uses is the division of things into dualistic all-or-nothing ('Manichean') categories. Thus we sort people we encounter and the things we experience into one or the other of two mutually exclusive sets. Some phenomena and political philosophies defy this process. For example, the existence of bisexuality challenges the accepted idea of sexual

orientation as a system of opposites. We are taught to think of people as either heterosexual ('normal') or homosexual ('deviant'). When faced with bisexuality, an option which does not fit into either of the accepted categories, and in fact even challenges the notion that such cut-and-dried categories exist, most people react with discomfort—their stable way of viewing the world is shaken. This is why so many people insist on seeing bisexuals as "really homosexual" or "really heterosexual," as being in transition between one pole and the other, or as being "part homosexual and part heterosexual," rather than "all bisexual." Transsexuality and androgyny have much the same effect with regard to polarized notions of gender.

### The Anarchist Philosophy

Anarchism as a political philosophy and way of living poses a challenge to categorical thinking. Anarchism as a philosophy places a high value on diversity, individuality, and choosing one's own self-identification. The main princi-

ple of anarchism is that hierarchical authority (including the state, the church, and economic elites) is not only unnecessary, but is in fact harmful. Anarchists believe that people can only realize their full human potential when they are free. Anarchism is more than a political program; it is a set of values and a way of life that encompasses political theory and practice and personal experience. The details of the anarchist vision and how to achieve it have varied widely with time and place, as indeed they must if they are to relevance beyond a specific era and locale. Anarchists believe that a just and organized society can be achieved in a non-hierarchical and participatory manner based on voluntary, cooperative, decentralized groups.

Anarchism is unique in its openness to new ideas, and its willingness to look beyond accepted categories. In order to remain relevant and fresh, it must absorb new viewpoints and integrate new groups. This openness to change makes anarchism a natural framework for feminists, bisexual people, lesbians and gay men, and others who have been excluded from traditional politics, and ignored or despised by many so-called 'radical' groups. In contrast, the very basis of Marxist politics (and many of the modern socialist politics derived from it) is the notion that people can be viewed as categories or classes, minimizing the role of the individual, and missing entirely the liberatory potential that lies in breaking free of such categorization. Other political philosophies, such as some forms of feminism and gay liberation, are also based on categories. It is not wrong for people to base their politics on group membership, and it may, in fact, be empowering to do so. Ultimately, though, we will have to look beyond identity politics to grasp the bigger picture. Anarcha-feminism goes beyond most forms of feminism in its recognition of and opposition to all forms of hierarchy and oppression. The early post-Stonewall gay liberation movement of the early 1970s focused on the idea of broad-based sexual liberation of all people, as opposed to the emphasis in the 1980s on civil rights for gay men and lesbians; fortunately, the new activism embodied in groups such as Queer Nation and the emerging bisexual movement may be returning to the ideals of radicalism, inclusion, and the interlinked nature of oppressions in our society.

Anarchist tactics such as direct action, affinity groups, and non-hierarchical organization, are important components of liberatory feminist and gay organizing. The struggle of progressive women and men, and of bisexuals, gay men, lesbians, transsexuals, and other sex and gender radicals to be free of the constraints of traditional gender roles and heterosexist norms is an inherent part of the anarchist goal of achieving the



freedom to live as one chooses while respecting the rights of others and attaining equality and respect in all types of human relationships.

### Why Anarcha-Feminism?

If anarchism is based on the elimination of all hierarchy, why do we need a separate category of anarcha-feminism? Some anarchists believe that anarcha-feminism is redundant, since anarchism *per se* addresses sexism and heterosexism as forms of domination that we seek to eradicate. Other anarchists (mostly women) disagree. They prefer the label 'anarcha-feminist' in order to emphasize feminist concerns. Historically, feminist values have gotten lost or been obscured within revolutionary politics. Women, who have been instrumental in radical movements for social change, have often seen new regimes come into power and revert to old sexist ways. Anarcha-feminists hope that by keeping 'feminism' in focus, the values represented by this word will infuse anarchist organizing, process, and goals. Anarcha-feminists do not seek to replace the existing patriarchy with a matriarchy; anarcha-feminism advocates the elimination of "power over" in favor of individual and collective empowerment that allows everyone to control their own lives. As with the early gay liberation movement, anarcha-feminist values were embodied in the second wave of feminism in the United States in the early seventies. In the 1980s, these values have been eroded in favor of a less inclusive 'pragmatism' that sacrifices process for results such as achieving electoral office or piecemeal civil rights laws.

### How is Sex Related to Politics?

Although concerns such as gender role and sexual orientation are often seen as divorced from politics, radical feminists and gay liberationists usually see them as intrinsically connected—"the personal is the political." Historically, anarchists have devoted much thought to issues of a personal/sexual nature. For example, Emma Goldman regularly questioned the institution of marriage and the traditional role of women, and the Free Love movement of the late 19th/early 20th century criticized the possessive commodity nature of compulsive monogamy. In fact, anarchists have often been criticized by other political tendencies for focussing on such 'bourgeois' concerns as sex, gender, and relationships, which we are assured will take care of themselves "after the revolution."

On a personal level, one's gender and sexual orientation can have a profound effect on the evolution of one's politics. At the same time, exposure to feminism and radical political ideologies such as anarchism can affect how one thinks about gender and sexual orientation.

In our society, people whose gender role or sexual orientation and practice fall outside of the accepted norm (women and men who reject patriarchal sex roles, androgynes, transsexuals, bisexuals, lesbians and gay men, the non-monogamous, and other sex and gender radicals) are subject to misunderstanding and prejudice, and in many cases outright oppression and violence. This often causes these people to take part in the struggle for liberation, leading to an increased political awareness. Those who are oppressed on the basis of their

gender or sexuality often become aware of the interconnections among various forms of oppression and seek a radical restructuring of society, with the ultimate goal of liberation for all people. Having a 'deviant' gender identity or sexual orientation may lead to a questioning of the patriarchal, heterosexual assumptions and practices that allow certain segments of the population to attain power and wealth at the expense of the rest.

The reverse may also occur. By studying political philosophy, engaging in

whole and creating a more equitable world in which diversity is accepted and celebrated. Given that the overthrow of the government hardly seems imminent, how can we go about fashioning such a future?

There are many ways to build social change movements; some of these are more anarchistic than others. Anarchists have ideas about political activism that differ from those of most liberals and leftists. Anarchists generally do not believe in petitioning the state for alleviation of their grievances, nor do they



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political discussion and action, and developing an awareness of injustice, many people begin to question the validity of the values and categories they have been taught. This may lead to the realization that they can refuse to accept the hierarchical, sexist, heterosexist, and sex-phobic tenets they grew up with, and they may begin to explore a variety of social, sexual, and relationship alternatives. An awareness of anarchism seems especially likely to encourage people to question their assumptions about sexuality and relationships. An understanding of the anarcha-feminist critique of the patriarchal power structure, traditional sex roles, the mandated nuclear family, and forced reproduction has led many proponents of anarchism to adopt a style of living and loving that is more in keeping with their beliefs.

### Creating an Alternative Future

While some anarchists and sexual minorities carry on their lives within alternative subcultures, many activists are committed to changing society as a

view restrictive legislation as the way to achieve their goals (such as the censorship of pornography in an attempt to alleviate sexism). Many feminists and bisexual and gay activists focus on reforming the system; these people are willing to work within the system because they want the immediate benefits that women-positive and gay-positive legislation could bring. Most anarchists believe that legislative and judicial change will not redress the damage caused by patriarchal, money-dominated forms of government and prejudicial attitudes; they believe that the system must be profoundly altered or undermined in order to bring about a very deep and lasting liberation. The short-term benefits of legislative change often prove insufficient and temporary. A law that activists have slaved over for years (such as laws 'guaranteeing' the right to abortion or gay civil rights) can be weakened or overturned as the prevailing political climate changes. Many reform-oriented activists rely heavily on the media to present their case, forgetting that the media is all too often a tool of those with power and money. Anar-

chists tend to emphasize direct action rather than attempting to sway public opinion through secondary means. Even more misguided than those who want to reform the system are those who wish to become a part of it. The gay rights movement has been plagued in recent years by a focus on issues such as the 'right' of gay, lesbian and bisexual people to serve in the military/police or to get married, refusing to face the basic repressive nature of such institutions, and the role they have played in keeping sexual minorities oppressed. Likewise, parts of the feminist movement in the 1980s emphasized strategies such as NOW's "Feminization of Power" campaign, which seeks to get women elected positions of power within the government; it's true that women have been underrepresented for too long, but an anarchist's choice would be to eliminate the government rather than increase women's role in it.

An anarchist strategy for social change includes finding ways to build strength and diversity by organizing from the grassroots, rather than centralizing power at the top. Anarchists hate to have one person representing different people with different perspectives. Anarchist process, which emphasizes consensus decision making, is often seen (accurately!) as slow and laborious, but many are willing to sacrifice expediency in order to avoid turning over decision making authority to an elected individual or to "the majority." Anarchists focus on education, both of group members and the larger public, and the exploration of creative and novel tactics.

### Building Alternative Structures

In our quest to create a better world, it is necessary to build new alternative, liberatory structures in addition to tearing the old ones down. The issues of reproductive freedom and AIDS are examples of areas where we can create empowering alternatives to state control of our lives.

At this time, the state is enacting ever-more stringent laws to restrict women's access to abortion. There are various strategies we can use in our fight for reproductive freedom. We can try to influence legislators by letter writing and electoral campaigns, we can concentrate on changing public opinion through large demonstrations and the press, or we can develop alternatives that will ensure our freedom of choice even when the state tries to take it away. The latter strategy, which is likely to have the most appeal to anarchists, could involve rebuilding a network of feminist health care centers (as existed in the 1970s), teaching each other safe and effective abortion methods (since we cannot, and should not have to, rely on the government and the medical establishment to take care of us), and rediscovering alternative abortion and contraceptive methods used by traditional women healers (such as herbs), while also doing independent research to develop new safe and effective options.

This same type of combination of strategies is being used in the fight against AIDS. Some put forth their effort into petitioning legislators for increased funding for AIDS care and research and for humane treatment of people with AIDS. Others engage in demonstrations and practice civil dis-

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# Without respite and without rest: Mujeres Libres and

By July 19, 1936, both feminism and anarchism had become established movements in Spain. On this date, the Fascists launched their military rebellion against the Spanish Republican government, setting into motion both a Civil War and the beginnings of an anarchist revolution. Despite the inherent connection of feminism and anarchism, the two remained largely separate up until this point. This separation prevented both movements from becoming truly liberating. Each was weak where the other was strong. Feminism had traditionally neglected to confront state oppression in its struggle against patriarchy. The anarchist movement, on the other hand, traditionally neglected to confront patriarchy in its opposition to the state. These failings continued to exist even amidst the widespread revolutionary fervor that was ignited throughout Spain. The anarchist activity at this time often denied the specificity of women's oppression and often perpetuated sexist practices. Meanwhile, non-anarchist women limited their activity to women's auxiliaries within the main, predominantly male organizations and set aside their aims to emancipate women. But the outbreak of the Spanish Revolution also marks the fusion of feminism and anarchism. They were united in the thoughts and actions of Mujeres Libres.

This libertarian women's organization was the first of its kind to specifically address concrete components of working class women's oppression while having as its ultimate goal the establishment of an anarchist society. Its members taught women to read and write, educated them about health care and held self-empowerment discussions not to promote their professional and legal standing, but to enable and encourage them to become equal partners with men in the making of revolution. The women of Mujeres Libres were unique in their insistence on being feminist, anarchist and autonomous.

## The Status of Women in Pre-Revolutionary Spain

In pre-revolutionary Spain, women were economically, legally and socially subordinated to men. The existing sexual division of labor relegated most women to unpaid domestic work. A woman's every day experience often did not extend beyond the realm of cleaning, cooking, caring for her children, going to the marketplace and perhaps tending the family garden plot. Those who did join the paid labor force were mostly unmarried and employed as domestics or as out-workers for textile factories. Such at-home work was not monitored by the token laws that applied to factory workers. This resulted

in conditions even more intolerable and unhealthy than those found in the factory. The women were usually paid in piece rates which compelled them to work longer hours for lower wages. Working at home subjected women to extremely poor health conditions, bad lighting and bad ventilation. A high percentage of pulmonary tuberculosis and typhoid victims were these women textile workers. Working outside the factory also rendered these women predominantly non-unionized and therefore disempowered. In or out of the factory, women were officially paid lower wages and received fewer (if any) benefits than men on the basis that they needed less due to the man's position as head of the family. This policy, however, applied also to single mothers. Economically, most women were entirely dependent on men.

Under the law, women had virtually no rights. This remained the case up until the early 1930s, at which point the feminist movement won various reforms. Previously women needed permission from their husbands to take a job; divorce and abortion were illegal; women did not have the vote and their access to health care and birth control was extremely limited.

The social practices of the day also subordinated women to and separated them from men. After the paid workday was over, women continued to do domestic chores and care for their children while men relaxed at bars or attended union meetings. Women's social lives centered around family members, neighbors and those with whom they worked or met at the marketplace. Women interacted with women and men with men. According to one Spanish woman, "men were ashamed to be seen on the streets with women. Men and women lived almost completely separate lives."<sup>1</sup> A woman's power over her own life was so minimal that for her to choose her own 'novio' (boyfriend) or go out alone would have been a privilege. The higher rate of illiteracy among women was also a divisive and disempowering factor. Peasants often could not afford putting all of their children through school and the scant savings they may have had were primarily invested in the schooling of the boys. This practice served as another way of forcing women to the bottom of the social and economic ladder and keeping them there.

## Women's Social Movements in Pre-Revolutionary Spain

The bourgeois, reformist feminist movement of the 1920s and 1930s did confront the degraded position of women, but not the degradation caused by the existence of the socio-economic ladder itself. They attempted to change the status of women solely within this



hierarchical framework, the idea being to climb up to higher legal and professional rungs. In this effort they did have some success. Women received the right to a maternity leave in the late twenties, compulsory maternity insurance was established in 1931, women received the right to vote in 1931, divorce became legal and prostitution became illegal. But sexual exploitation was (and is) not something which can simply be outlawed and thus eliminated. As a result, these laws (when and if enforced) had little effect in terms of improving women's working conditions or in terms of improving the way they were viewed and treated by men.

This brand of feminism was preceded by the communalist, working class women's strikes of the teens of the century. The first of these strikes occurred in 1910 around the issue of an incident of child molestation. The women of Barcelona rallied in support of a seven year old girl who had been raped by a strange man in a convent orphanage. When the case went to court, the

women's community-based, emotionally supportive action turned in a political and public direction. Women refused to allow the government to take their place in handling the situation. The demonstration that they had planned to hold on the Plaza of Bishop Uriquenaona was banned by the governor and their activity was eventually subdued.

The next major uprising of women occurred in the form of the 1913 Barcelona textile strike. At this time 16 to 18 percent of all women over fourteen in and around Barcelona were employed in the textile industry. Women worked an eleven to twelve hour day and few earned more than two *pesetas* a day. Men, on the other hand, worked a ten hour day and earned between three *pesetas* and three *pesetas* 75 centimos a day. Due to the many women who did piece work at home for jobbers who were not necessarily part of the textile industry, women organized by neighborhood, not by trade, making it more difficult to strike effectively. It was traditional for women to support men



# the Spanish Revolution

By Amy Meselson

in their strikes, but strikes by women for the betterment of their own working conditions were rare. At the general meeting of the Constanca Union on February 17, 1913, however, over one thousand women gathered along with male workers. It was decided to boycott the largest companies in the surrounding districts. But this decision did not address the immediate concerns of women, primarily, feeding their families. The women then surpassed the actions of the union by holding demonstrations in their neighborhood squares, establishing communal food kitchens and forming public information centers. As conditions did not improve and food became increasingly scarce, workers gathered once again on July 27 and, due to the women's insistence, decided to go out on strike. This decision was followed by numerous all-women marches to the governor's office, the militancy and determination of which was criticized by the male strike leaders. This militancy and determination, nonetheless, led to the declaration of a general strike on August 10. The strike committee eventually came to an agreement with the governor, but the women insisted that this was insufficient and continued to strike. Ultimately their actions were squelched by the police and the governor issued a royal decree that essentially ignored the demands of the strikers.

Once again in 1918, women attempted to take control over their lives. Although Spain was not a belligerent in the First World War, the civilian population of Barcelona suffered war time shortages of food and fuel. Coal for electric and gas power was diminishing while bread prices were soaring. On January 9 of one of the coldest winters on record, women launched their attack on the coal trucks. Up to 1,000 women would seize the coal and then auction it off at the lowest stipulated price. On January 10 a group of about 200 working class housewives marched past the textile factories of Barcelona and summoned the female workers to join them. The workers, paid and unpaid, then proceeded to the governor's office and made their demands known. Such instances of women seizing the resources that were being stolen from them by speculators and by the government occurred throughout Barcelona. Neighborhood commissions, delegations to the governor's office, strikes, demonstrations and marches proliferated throughout the city. '*Vecindaria*', a specific term meaning "female comrade" emerged out of close networks formed by women at this time. By January 15, most female workers were on strike and had forced shops to close. About 1,700 male workers had also gone out on strike. But the men and women were not unified in their protests. Though the women urged their male comrades to

leave the workplace as well, the men excluded them from their activities. Women continued to strike and demonstrate even after the government resorted to military repression, declared a state of siege and suspended civil rights.

All three of these events demonstrate the latent potential of Spanish working class women to rise up in solidarity with each other and demand that their needs be met. They are even anarchistic in the sense that the women refused to allow the government and wealthy classes to take away their means of subsistence; they refused to watch power be lifted from their local communities. But these events also demonstrate the limitations of such political consciousness. While the women were able to recognize the blatant injustices of the government, they did not recognize the more accepted and ingrained sexual division of labor. According to Temma Kaplan, "These women believed they did [have the right to speak for humanity] so long as they acted to preserve the division of labor, to do what women do—that is, to act female." Kaplan underscores this "acceptance of the sexual division of labor as a means of survival."<sup>2</sup> But in terms of truly liberating women from the domination of the government and of sexual stereotypes based on patriarchal values, this acceptance is not a means of survival, but one of continued oppression. The view that women have the right to take action only when they are defending their 'female' right to nurture their families severely limits the scope of their political activity. This view also raises the question of people, male or female, needing such a drastic reason as their lives being threatened to take action against the government. Moreover, the defense of this division of labor burdens women alone with house keeping, child rearing and all other domestic responsibilities. Within a patriarchal culture the sexual division of labor, whatever it may be, inherently assigns women to a more subservient role than that of men, limits their worth to their performance in this role and simultaneously declares the fulfillment of this role as trivial and inferior to the fulfillment of men's work. But men and women alike are oppressed by such strict divisions of labor, for they inevitably mean that individuals, regardless of gender, cannot fully and freely develop their own personalities; they are constantly molded by societal definitions of their sex. Men and women are pushed into separate and predetermined ways of life starting at birth and, therefore, become alienated both from each other and from themselves. Perhaps if sexual divisions were not so emphasized and accepted, if men and women cooperated out of their own free wills, and if the division of labor was created according to each individual's abilities, talents and desires the mutual survival of all people

would be enriched. Acceptance of the sexual division of labor certainly is a means of survival, but in order to fully understand this statement it is necessary to ask, who makes the division, and what survives?

Both the bourgeois feminism of the twenties and the working class women's movements of the teens ignored vital aspects of women's oppression. They were accepting and supportive of social structures and psychologies that are hierarchical and patriarchal. The bourgeois feminists with their emphasis on legal rights and professional privileges alienated and oppressed women (and men) of lower classes and broader minds. The women of the proletariat, on the other hand were not interested in legal or professional promotions, but with feeding their families. They only took action, though, on the basis that their rights as women were being encroached upon by the government, thereby subscribing to patriarchal values. In terms of a women's movement aimed at full liberation, at the destruction of both the division of classes and the division of labor by sex, a gap remains unfilled.

## Anarchists in Pre-Revolutionary Spain

The Spanish anarchist movement was far more developed and widespread than the feminist movement, but was similar in its incomplete critique of the oppressive elements of society. Anarchistic organization in the rural areas of Spain existed even before the Roman invasion.<sup>3</sup> Anarchism as a deliberate movement also was strongly rooted in rural and industrial Spain for decades before Franco's military rebellion. The Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT) was formed in 1910 as a national anarcho-sindicalist organization. It focused heavily on the day-to-day demands of the workers and thus had reformist tendencies. Their leaning more toward the 'syndicalist' than the 'anarcho' inspired the development of the Federación Anarquista Ibérica (FAI) in 1927. The FAI set adherence to the basic principles of anarchism as their highest priority, not to be abandoned or compromised for the sake of token reforms. A conflict between those who were pure trade unionists and those who viewed trade unionism as being important only in the context of a libertarian social revolution continued up until the eve of the Revolution. Just two months earlier, in May of the same year, the CNT met at the Saragossa congress. At this time, the CNT adopted an outline of libertarian communism which had been published in 1932 by the CNT activist and theorist, Isaac Puente, and also delineated the workings of direct village democracy. Thus in the theoretical and practical realms,

Spanish anarchists were surprisingly well prepared to actually revolutionize their daily life when the opportunity arose so suddenly.

In the realm of relationships between men and women, though, the anarchists had developed no practical theory. Historically, it had predominantly been the men who were directly involved in the anarchist movement. Women's awareness and support of anarchism came mostly through their husband's or father's activities. The traditional, insular, parochial economy in rural Spain was actually called the *patria chica* or little fatherland. Sam Dolgoff discusses "the rural 'patriarchs' of anarchism whose entire families were devoted to 'the idea.'"<sup>4</sup> Dolgoff's wording suggests that the father dictated the political stand of everyone else in the family. The process that led to this devotion to "the Idea", then, was not an anarchistic one, but an authoritarian one. The anarchism of these 'patriarchs' did not apply to their families, to their personal relationships, or to women in general. One woman who was raised in an anarchist home recalled the following: "There was much talk about the liberation of women, free love, and all that. Men spoke from platforms about it. But there were very, very few who actually adopted women's struggle as their own, in practice...Inside their own homes they forgot about it."<sup>5</sup> Male anarchists did acknowledge the need for women's emancipation, but did not realistically address it. Various issues concerning women as well as the problem of women's emancipation were discussed in the congresses of the CNT. Discussion was limited, however, to the denunciation of civil and clerical marriage and the advocacy of women's trade unions. It was generally agreed that women should be liberated and patriarchy should be abolished, but it was also generally agreed that this issue did not deserve specific attention.

Although some believed that women's subordination must be separately confronted and overcome, for the most part this issue was ignored and delegitimized by the main anarchist organizations. Some dismissed the problem of women's subordination with the theory that patriarchy would disappear upon the establishment of an anarchist society. Others claimed that a separate organization specifically devoted to the confrontation of patriarchy as well as to a libertarian revolution would divide the movement. They viewed patriarchy as a problem for both men and women, which it is, but that should only be dealt with within the context of a larger anarchist organization, in this case, the CNT.

This strategy for women's emancipation has two major flaws. One is that the CNT was predominantly organized

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around labor issues. Its members did devote energies to forming women's unions and advocating the equalization of men's and women's wages and hours, though they did not organize the trades in which most employees were women. But what about all the women who were not a part of the paid labor force? The second fault in the strategy is its assumption that a woman who has been oppressed by men all her life, who has been considered an embarrassment to men when seen with them on the streets, who has led an almost entirely separate existence from men, who has never attended a union or any public meeting, and who is illiterate, would feel comfortable enough to participate on an equal level with men in a revolutionary group. The necessity of small groups specifically for women devoted to educating them, raising their political consciousness, empowering them and addressing the concrete problems with which they were dealing every day was almost entirely dismissed. If most men in the CNT were liberated from traditions of dominating women and were devoted to the task of encouraging them to join their ranks, perhaps such groups would not have been necessary. But it was not so. CNT members did not encourage women to participate in the anarchist movement. On the contrary, women had reason to feel specifically discouraged from participating. This was due to the sexism of the men in the movement, to their failure to address concrete issues of concern to women and to the fact that women were not psychologically or intellectually prepared. This lack of preparation and lack of participation on an equal footing with men can be seen in the fact that anarchist women made no demands regarding the improvement of their working conditions even though they were even poorer than those of men. Many male anarchist trade unionists "viewed women as potential strike-breakers, a ready source of cheap labor." Women who were forced to rely upon the charity of religious organizations were also rejected by members of anarchist trade unions who were "Blinded sometimes by anticlericalism...."<sup>6</sup> Women simply were not respected. One woman who in 1933 was invited to teach a minicourse at a meeting of one of the CNT union offices found that to do so "was impossible, because of the attitudes of some *compañeros*. They didn't take women seriously. They thought that all women needed to do was cook and sew...Women barely dared speak in that context."<sup>7</sup> In 1935, the CNT's national secretary wrote "We know that it is more pleasant to give orders than to obey...Between the woman and the man the same thing occurs. The male feels more satisfied having a servant to make his food, wash his clothes...That is reality. And, in the face of that, to ask that men cede (their privileges) is to dream."<sup>8</sup>

And so anarchist women were left to dream. The reality of the feminist movement alienated them with its capitalist, statist feminism which did not extend beyond the bourgeois districts. The anarchist movement alienated them with its anarcho-patriarchs whose anarchism stopped on the threshold of their homes. Any woman who wanted to

destroy the state, abolish capitalism and nurture herself and her comrades was an isolated individual. It was not until such women united and organized together that they left the realm of dreaming and entered the realm of creating.

### Changes in the Status of Women in Revolutionary Spain

The outbreak of civil war helped facilitate anarchist-feminist organization and activity as it brought with it concrete legal and social changes in the lives of women. The national Popular Front government legalized divorce and granted women full juridical status. The Catalan Generalitat legalized abortion and civil marriage. Women's issues in general were increasingly prominent within the government due to the actions of the anarchist minister of Health and Social Service, Federica Montseny. She had come from an anarchist background, was a prominent member of the FAI and was a celebrated orator within anarchist circles. She drafted the law that legalized abortion, argued for birth control instruction and argued against the law banning prostitution. This law, passed in 1935 by the Republican government, was supposedly for the benefit of women. But considering the fact that it was not accompanied by any program to help women find other means of subsistence, this law was only another way in which society victimized women. Montseny viewed prostitution as "a problem of moral, economic and social character, which cannot be resolved juridically."<sup>9</sup> Instead of outlawing prostitution, she created centers where prostitutes and all women in need may go and be cared for. She also worked with and supported the activities of *Mujeres Libres*. She did have some sexist attitudes such as her belief that "women would always enjoy 'compliments' (i.e. sexist comments), incredulous at the suggestion that these might be thought insulting,"<sup>10</sup> but on the whole created positive reforms for women.

More significantly, women underwent changes in the economic sphere. These changes resulted not from reforms within the Popular Front government, but from fundamental alterations of daily life brought about by the anarchist revolution. As in any wartime situation where men are needed to fight, women are forced to take on what are normally considered male responsibilities. Primarily, women were needed to keep the factories running. The influx of women into urban industries resulted in their being readily accepted in unions where they had previously been excluded. Women even began to take on roles as delegates and officials within the CNT and UGT (Union General de Trabajadores/ the socialist trade union). This increased female presence in union activities and the collectivization of industries brought about better working conditions for women. Their wages were increased, though still not reaching the level of men's wages, and out-work was abolished. Both men and women needle-workers were set to work in larger factories with greater ventilation and better working conditions. In collectivized rural areas also, women became increasingly involved in decision-making and working the fields. Their participation in these areas, however, was still limited in comparison with that of men.



Spanish militiamen, 1936.

Personal freedoms also increased as a result of the new revolutionary lifestyle. Such freedoms as going out alone, choosing one's own boyfriend, wearing trousers and speaking in public were all new experiences for Spanish women. In the words of one woman who was about sixteen at the time, "Imagine the difference when a woman actually spoke up in an assembly; or went out alone—where she pleased—at night; or chose her own *novio*!"<sup>11</sup> Various traditions such as the chaperoning of militia women even when armed did continue and there was no fundamental change in relations between the sexes. But various sexist modes of conduct were abandoned or, at least, relaxed.

### Anti-Fascist Women's Activity

Women also participated actively in the anti-fascist struggle. Non-anarchist anti-fascist women's groups mostly limited themselves to *secciones femeninas* or women's auxiliaries to the male run anti-fascist, party organizations. Nonetheless, they played a crucial role in fending off the fascist troops. In the cities they demonstrated, propagandized, built barricades, established soup kitchens for refugees and set up mobile first-aid stations for the victims of fascist fifth-column snipers. They also conducted anti-aircraft observation and fifth-column surveillance. In addition to working in the rear, women were active at the front cooking, sewing, nursing and fighting. In November 1936, for example, a women's battalion in Madrid fought against the Nationalist army. In Gestafo, along the northern front, women remained under fire all morning and

were the last to leave and return to Madrid. This military presence soon died out. According to George Orwell, women, "In the early battles...had fought side by side with the men as a matter of course." Later on, however, "militiamen had to be kept out of the riding school while women were drilling there, because they laughed at the women and put them off. A few months earlier no one would have seen anything comic in a woman handling a gun."<sup>12</sup>

This action on the part of women, however, was not taken in the context of furthering women's emancipation, but was seen by most simply as a temporary state of affairs which came about by necessity. One of the most significant anti-fascist women's organizations was the Agrupacion de Mujeres Antifascistas. In July, 1936 the A.M.A. included about 50,000 members divided among about 255 local groups. The president of this organization was Dolores Ibaruri (a.k.a. La Pasionaria), a prominent member of the Spanish Communist Party. The original objectives of the A.M.A. were: "1) to contribute to the struggle against fascism and in favor of peace; 2) to defend 'culture' and women's right to an education to overcome their enslavement to ignorance; 3) to defend civil rights and equal justice; 4) to incorporate women fully into the political and social life of the country." But the A.M.A. turned away from its feminist direction in order to focus more fully on the anti-fascist war. This was a common turn of events in Spain as the goals of other so-called revolutionary groups also became subordinated to this seemingly more urgent one.



The typical slogan of the Popular Front government which included Communist Party members, socialists and even anarchists was "war first, revolution afterwards."<sup>13</sup> It eventually became evident, however, that this really meant war first, revolution never. The A.M.A. declared itself to be nonpartisan, but "the majority of its officers and activists, particularly at the national and provincial, but also at the local levels, was affiliated with communist or orthodox socialist organizations."<sup>14</sup> These unofficial connections to various parties along with the ease with which the A.M.A. abandoned its feminist activities indicate that it did in fact subscribe to party lines about the importance of focusing all energies on the war, unofficially or officially. Ultimately, like the women's auxiliaries which were explicitly connected with a party, the A.M.A. essentially became an auxiliary to the Popular Front. For them it was war first, women's liberation afterwards.

### Anarchist Activity during the Civil War

Meanwhile, in the anarchist camp, women's liberation remained a low priority and the war became an increasingly higher one over revolution. By the time of Franco's military rebellion, anarcho-sindicalism was so widespread and well organized that a social revolution occurred spontaneously. This spontaneous action on the part of the workers was able to check the rebellion within 24 hours and all vestiges of the state essentially lost their purpose as far as the economic functioning and military defense of Republican Spain was concerned. The CNT-FAI immediately began organizing and putting into place structures for worker's self-management on farms, in factories and in essentially every other economic institution. According to the anarchists, this far-reaching radicalization of the economy, including millions of people "would lead ipso facto to the 'liquidation of the bourgeois State, which would die of asphyxiation.'"<sup>15</sup> This underestimation of the force of the government combined with the CNT-FAI's refusal to "exercise an anarchist 'dictatorship'"<sup>16</sup> led to their collaboration with the Popular Front government. The first step in the direction of collaborating with the Popular Front government. The first step in the direction of collaborating with the government was taken only two days after the anarchists drove back the fascists. On July 21, Luis Companys, president of the Catalan government, met with the CNT and offered to resign or, if the CNT so wished, stay in office with his sole purpose being to serve the workers and the anti-fascist cause. Garcia Oliver, the spokesman for the CNT delegation, accepted the latter offer and thus set a precedent of compromise. Contrary to his seemingly friendly and honest proposal, Companys did not serve the workers, but reestablished the previous power structure wherein the workers were the servants of the government. Less than one year later, anarchists held governmental positions in Catalonia and Madrid and soon "became infected and succumbed to the virus of power."<sup>17</sup>

The series of concessions made by CNT-FAI officials must be looked at in the light of the enormous odds facing them. The anarchist alliance with the Popular Front was exclusively an alliance against Franco, and it came about



A view from the front.

only out of necessity. Within the government there were republicans, socialists and Communists, all of whom were opposed to a libertarian revolution. There also were the 'democratic' countries such as Great Britain, France and America who did not take a stand against the fascists, but, due to economic interests, would have strongly opposed an anarchist revolution. Also to be considered is the increasingly heavy Stalinist influence within the government due to Spain's reliance on Russian military aid. Stalin's aid was conditional in two ways: "1) the Communist Party must profit from it as much as possible, and the anarchists little as possible; 2) Stalin wanted at any price to prevent the victory of a social revolution in Spain, not only because it would have been libertarian, but because it would have expropriated capital investments belonging to Britain which was presumed to be an ally of the U.S.S.R. in the 'democratic alliance' against Hitler."<sup>18</sup> And of course there was the central threat of the fascists. Some kind of mutual effort with these pseudo-allies was obviously necessary to resisting fascism. But collaboration so complete as assuming portfolios within the government itself and refusing the president's offer to resign, and to have done so, so soon after the war broke out, were unnecessary measures regarding the anti-fascist struggle and a fatal overestimation of the government's sincerity. Even more importantly, they show an abandonment of the most basic principles of anarchism. Not all anarchists agreed with the measures taken by the officials of the CNT and called instead for a war which was not only anti-fascist, but revolutionary. One of the most prominent in denouncing the anarchist collaboration with the government was the Italian anarchist Camillo Berneri. In an open letter to Federica Montseny, Berneri states that "A grave error has been committed in accepting authoritarian forms—not because they were such from the formal point of view—but because they concealed enormous errors and political objectives which have nothing to do with the necessities of war."<sup>19</sup>

The accomplishments of the anarchists at this time were, nonetheless, extraordinary. Their transformation of society, though brief, under such great odds imparts undeniable credibility to anarchist theory. It is important, nonetheless, to examine the flaws of this transformation. The most serious of these is the degree to which the oppression of women was maintained through-

out this time. Some may argue that the anarchist collaboration with the government was a necessity, or at least that the anarchists were pressured into it. But such arguments can not be used when considering why anarchists continued to conform to the sexist practices of society. Why is it that the anarchist movement rose up against the state, rose up against capitalism, rose up against the church, but remained still when it came to patriarchy? Perhaps this is due to the fact that most anarchists were working class and therefore did not benefit from the power of a government official, from the spoils of capitalism and from the grandeur of the Catholic church. The male anarchists, however, did benefit from the patriarchal system. Perhaps it is because patriarchy is more subtly passed on as it is taught to men and women from birth. Science, at this time, stated as fact that women were inferior to men while Christianity often associated women with evil, the original sinners. Patriarchy, in other words, is not a concrete entity in the way that the state or church or an economic system is, but rather a general way of thinking which pervades all aspects of culture (and counter-culture) and therefore is more difficult to recognize and confront. But, for whatever reasons, the anarchist movement generally considered patriarchy a subordinate issue, one that would be resolved upon the establishment of anarchist society and that did not deserve specific attention in the present. It is necessary to examine and learn from this failure.

### The Role of Women in Anarchist Spain

As briefly described above, women did become somewhat more liberated in the collective areas. New occupations on the farm and in the factories were available to them, the institutions of civil and clerical marriage were entirely abolished, and women generally were able to relate to men on a more equal footing. But none of these changes was complete.

The new occupations were mostly opened out of necessity and often left women subordinated in the workplace. Due to the remaining sexual division of labor by which women were still responsible for domestic chores, they were often unable to take on new occupations. These new occupations, in actuality, were often considered to be another burden in light of the fact that engaging in them did not eliminate any

previous responsibilities. In the rural areas most women living on collectivized farms did field work outside the home only in the case of financial necessity. Meanwhile, in urban areas, improvements in working conditions did not affect those conditions specific to women's work nor did they affect sexism within the workplace. On collectivized farms the "family wage" was commonly implemented. Under this system, wages were paid according to the need of the worker's family. This led, however, to the commonly held belief that women did not need as high a wage as men did due to the patriarchal family. Nonetheless, the policy was not directly economically harmful to women as it ensured that everyone's needs were accounted for, but only within the context of the father as the chief provider. In other collectives women were paid lower wages even outside the context of the family wage. In the Segorbe agricultural collective, for example, men received 5 *pesetas* a day while single women received 4 and married women received 2.<sup>20</sup> In factories also, women were subject to economic discrimination. Women's wages were increased but still did not reach the level of men's wages.

With regard to marital and family relationships, anarchists discontinued the practices of civil and clerical marriage, but they did not discontinue patriarchal family practices. The actual living situation of men and women was not altered. According to contemporary historian of feminism and political activism, Martha Ackelsberg, "The much discussed doctrine of 'free love' meant simply, living together without civil or religious marriage."<sup>21</sup> Within these relationships, women did not leave the realm of house work and men did not enter it.

Outside the home, the gap between the status of men and that of women became somewhat smaller than it had been. As stated earlier, women experienced new personal freedoms at this time such as going out alone and choosing one's own boyfriend. In general women had a greater sense of self-confidence. Franz Borkenau<sup>22</sup> noted in Madrid women's "obvious enjoyment of what was for many a first appearance in public—collecting in couples, going up and down the street and into elegant cafes, talking uninhibitedly to foreigners and militia-men."<sup>23</sup> These changes, however, were not due to any effort on the part of the CNT-FAI. Within their meetings, though not officially, women's inferior status remained. Although every member of the collective was ostensibly included in the decision-making process, it seems that only workers, and therefore men, were actually expected to participate. Women did participate, though not necessarily as equals, with men in making decisions. Men, however, were not troubled by the lower degree of input from women as they did not create any means by which to increase it. One woman activist recalled that "The men, too, noticed that there weren't many women who were activists. But it didn't bother them. In fact, most were just as happy to have a *companerita* who didn't know as much as they."<sup>24</sup>

This on-going acceptance of the sexual division of labor and the patriarchal values shows a major conflict between anarchist theory and anarchist practice of the time. Granted, it would have

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## Mujeres Libres

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been impossible to establish a sexually egalitarian society as quickly and as thoroughly as an economically egalitarian society was established. Ways of thinking and acting which have been ingrained for generations are far more complex and difficult to eliminate than an economic system which has been resisted for generations. But the main inconsistency lies in the fact that patriarchy was not viewed as something which should specifically be confronted and abolished. Even though anarchists insisted that "revolutionary movements can develop effectively only if they speak to the specific realities of people's lives,"<sup>25</sup> men among them largely neglected to speak to the specific reality that women were oppressed at home, in the workplace and in the community by men. And whatever speaking they did do regarding this issue could not be heard from within the home or the union hall.

The "war first, women's liberation afterwards" attitude of the non-anarchist anti-fascist women combined with the "war first, then revolution, then women's liberation" attitude of most anarchists, left anarchist women who wanted "war now, revolution now, women's liberation now" to their own devices. Women who were of such a mind faced all the opposition that the previous two groups faced in addition to the opposition of those groups themselves. Nonetheless, such women spoke up, organized themselves and began realizing their goals.

### Anarchist Women: Mujeres Libres

Mujeres Libres or Free Women was founded in May of 1936 by working class, anarcho-syndicalist activists, Mercedes Comaposada, Lucia Sanchez Saornil and Amparo Poch Y Gascon. The organization had begun developing, however, at least two years beforehand. It originated out of the concern of anarchist women regarding the small number of women who were active in the CNT. Anarchist women in Madrid and Barcelona began to take action in addressing this problem. One such woman, Soledad Estorach, stated that "women would come to a meeting once—maybe they'd even join—or come, for example, on a Sunday excursion, or to a discussion group—they'd come once and never be seen again...Even in the industries where there were many women workers—textiles, for example—there were few women who ever spoke at union meetings. We got concerned about all the women we were losing, so we thought about creating a women's group to deal with these issues...In 1935, we sent out a call to all women in the libertarian movement...though we focused mainly on the younger *companeras*. We called our group 'Grupo cultural femenino, CNT.'<sup>26</sup> Letters had also been sent out previous to this, starting at the end of 1933. These letters were sent out of Madrid to all of Spain proposing the idea to create a women's organization. According to Mercedes Comaposada, the editor of the *Mujeres Libres* periodical, the responses were "incredibly enthusiastic, and there were always more."<sup>27</sup>

Mujeres Libres, then, developed out of women's groups within the CNT

which had as their objective the formation of a larger female body within the libertarian movement. In late 1935, the Barcelona and Madrid groups came into contact with each other. They eventually decided that in order to effectively prepare and encourage women to become activists, autonomy was necessary; women needed to address the problems of their daily lives. One member elaborated on this need for autonomy: "Revolutionary men who are struggling for their freedom fight only against the outside world, against a world opposed to desires for freedom, equality and social justice. Revolutionary women, on the other hand, have to fight on two levels. First they must fight for their external freedom. In this struggle men are their allies in the same ideals in an identical cause. But women also have to fight for their inner freedom which men have enjoyed for centuries. And in this struggle women are on their own."<sup>28</sup> This emphasis on autonomy was not derived in the traditional 'feminist' sense which was only concerned with advancing the status of women within the existing society. The separate standing of Mujeres Libres, in contrast, was based upon the insistence that "women's preparation to engage in revolutionary activity must develop out of their own particular life experiences."<sup>29</sup>

The women who made up Mujeres Libres (amounting to 20,000 in July 1937 and 30,000 by the summer of 1938) were mostly working class. They sometimes came from anarchist families and most had been involved in unions. Others had been exposed to revolutionary ideas and lifestyles through *aeteneos* or rationalist schools. These schools were developed in the working class barrios of Barcelona in the 1930s. Supported by local unions, they were the only alternative to the predominant, Church-run education system. The *aeteneos* were nonhierarchical in their structure, they implemented a participatory approach to learning and they aimed at fostering literacy, class consciousness and self-confidence in the young. Most of the schools had libraries which were open to the young and sponsored recreational outings. In addition, the *aeteneos* were coeducational and thus enabled young men and women to interact as equals. Soledad Estorach remembers her experience at an *aeteneo* as "an incredible life, the life of a young militant. A life dedicated to struggle, to knowledge, to remaking society. It was characterized by a kind of effervescence, a constant activity."<sup>30</sup> The women of Mujeres Libres had experience in anarchistic communities and activities, but were not able to feel fully satisfied with their roles in the anarcho-syndicalist unions. Their previous orientation to radical ideas and liberatory lifestyles, then, helped enable them to recognize the failings of the existing unions, identify their specific needs and have the self-confidence to ensure that they be met.

The primary objective of Mujeres Libres was to alleviate the various components of women's subordination so that they could participate as equals with men in the revolutionary struggle. They identified these components as economic dependence and exploitation, ignorance about childcare, healthcare and sexuality, a low level of social consciousness, the patriarchal family, illiteracy and, generally, a low level of self-



esteem. Equally important as the issues they confronted is the way in which they confronted them. The organization's autonomous standing separated it from the organizations whose overwhelmingly male constituency and sexist practices threatened women's ability to increase their self-confidence. Through distributing literature on the streets, publishing a magazine, and mailing information to women, Mujeres Libres made these aims known. A leaflet which was distributed on the streets of Barcelona included a list of their general goals:

*"To emancipate women from the triple slavery of ignorance, traditional passivity, and exploitation."*

*To fight ignorance and educate our comrades individually and socially through simple lessons, conferences, lectures, cinema projections, etc.*

*To arrive at real understanding between men and women: living together, working together and not excluding each other."<sup>31</sup>*

In a pamphlet on *How to Organize a Mujeres Libre Group*, they stated,

*"We want you to have the same freedom as your brother...we want your voice to be heard with that same authority as your father's. We want you to attain—without worrying about what people will say—that independent life you have wanted."*

*But, realize, that all this requires your effort; that these things don't come for nothing; and that, in order to achieve them, you need the assistance of others. You need others to be concerned with the same things as you, you need to help them as they will help you. In a single word, you must struggle communally; which is the same as saying you must create a group of women."<sup>32</sup>*

Mujeres Libres went about achieving their goals by using direct action at the local level. One main focus of their action was illiteracy. They set up classes

to increase literacy which, in their view, would enrich women's understanding of their socio-economic position and enable and encourage them to become activists. Many women saw their own illiteracy as a source of embarrassment and were thus impeded by it in terms of becoming fully active in the revolutionary struggle. The development of literacy, then, was also seen as a means by which to gain self-confidence.

Another area targeted by Mujeres Libres' direct action was economic dependence. They set up training facilities and employment programs for women. Women's emergence out of the home and into the paid labor force was looked upon by Mujeres Libres not as a temporary state of affairs, but as an opportunity for women to escape their position as dependents on men. This dependency was viewed as the result of the sexual division of labor which limited women to jobs with the lowest wage scales and the worst working conditions. Mujeres Libres collaborated with the CNT to hold training, support and apprenticeship programs in factories for working class women. They also set up agricultural training programs in the rural areas. An integral part of these activities was the establishment of childcare facilities so that women could attend the programs. They saw women's ignorance about their sexuality and their general alienation from their bodies as the major components of this type of subordination. Amparo Poch y Gascon argued that the experience of sexual pleasure was rare among women due to their ignorance of their own bodies and that this helped maintain male domination. Up until this point, the church had dominated health care. Mujeres Libres trained women as nurses and midwives to take the place of those in hospitals who were mostly nuns. In maternity hospitals, they set up



programs for women to become more knowledgeable and skilled at taking care of their own and their children's health.

Related to these activities is *Mujeres Libres'* program involving children. They sponsored courses in child rearing geared towards preparing children for an anarchist way of life. They also developed alternative forms of education which were nonhierarchical in their structure. The aims of this education were to confront bourgeois and patriarchal values and to encourage children to think independently. They also helped to train new teachers and develop new curricula.

One more issue which *Mujeres Libres* directly attempted to deal with is that of prostitution. Believing that sex should be an equal and free experience between men and women (homosexuality was not an issue for them), and not a commodity or a means of degradation, they launched a campaign against prostitution. Contrary to similar government-sponsored campaigns, they did not take on a moralistic attitude or simply try to dissuade women from becoming prostitutes. The women of *Mujeres Libres* recognized the complexities and the larger context inextricably connected to this problem. They had the idea to set up *liberatorios de prostitucion* where former prostitutes could be cared for while they prepared to begin a new way of life. Although the added activities and limitations brought on by the war prevented them from ever actually implementing their plan, it is nonetheless significant. They did, however, confront this issue by trying to persuade anarchist men not to patronize prostitutes as doing so was perpetuating a form of exploitation.

All these activities were carried out simultaneously with and in the context of "*preparacion social*." It was necessary not only to help women deal with the specific difficulties of their lives, but to show that, if they were to truly liberate themselves and others from external authority, they must do these things within the context of social revolution. In order to raise women's consciousness and prepare them to act in this respect, *Mujeres Libres* held discussion groups and talks. These events, geared toward empowerment or '*capacitacion*', helped women gain enough confidence to voice their own opinions. On visits to factories, *Mujeres Libres* women would provide information on anarcho-syndicalism and discuss the need for women in the anarcho-syndicalist movement along with fulfilling their official role of encouraging unionization. They also set up *guarderías volantes* or flying daycare centers in order to enable mothers to attend union meetings. Often times, when the mothers picked up their children, *Mujeres Libres* members would engage them in conversation about anarcho-syndicalism or communitarian anarchism.<sup>33</sup>

In addition to focussing on empowering women, *Mujeres Libres* challenged sexism within the anarchist movement. They tried to explain to both men and women the need for a separate organization to confront the factors which prevented women from participating as confident equals within the anarchist movement. The strategy of empowering women only by incorporating them into the movement was not realistic due to the complex and numerous social influences that tell women that they are inferior to men. At the same time, they



This libertarian poster reads "Every person is born with the capacity for dignified work and a human existence."

made it clear that their efforts were not aimed against men, but at creating an egalitarian revolutionary movement.

Despite this extensive campaign to empower and liberate women, *Mujeres Libres* failed to recognize and confront certain patriarchal practices. Although they aimed at enabling and encouraging women to join the paid labor force, they generally did not confront the sexual division of labor itself. The societal assumption that women alone bear responsibility for childcare and domestic chores was never questioned. The idea that this is the only role women may play, however, was confronted. In the words of Lucia Sanchez Saornil, "The concept of mother is absorbing that of woman, the function is annihilating the individual."<sup>34</sup> They emphasized the distinction between woman and mother, asserting that the two need not be synonymous in order for the former to be of value. Another area which was not fully confronted, as there were divisions within the group, was marriage and monogamy. Some were critical of both on the grounds that, as Amparo Poch y Gascon asserted, marriages should not be "contracted, in practice, for always" and that the possibility of "cultivating outside of it other...loves"<sup>35</sup> should never be eliminated. Marriage and monogamy were considered bourgeois practices that regarded women as property. It is likely, however, that most members were not in accord with this viewpoint. Also, during the war, *Mujeres Libres* joined in using the slogan "*hombres al frente, mujeres al taller*" (men at the front, women at the rear). As discussed above, front line fighting by women was originally accepted and practiced, but eventually became unheard of. Consid-

ering the forces which led to this change (i.e. men's disrespect and refusal to take women seriously), to advocate this sharp division of roles is to overlook and even perpetuate an important area of women's subordination.

The outbreak of the war caused *Mujeres Libres* to take on additional activities specifically geared toward the anti-fascist struggle. In a report issued by the Madrid group, they stated that "The war has developed the line of activity of the Madrid Group in a direction somewhat different from the ideas that motivated us in the beginning." Originally, they had "proposed to awaken in women by an adequate cultural education, the stimulus of social activity."<sup>36</sup> As a result of the new revolutionary situation, however, they devoted much time to their Sections of Labor. They actually organized and operated seven such sections in place of the ones previously operated by the government: Transport, Public Health, Public Services, Nursing, Clothing and Mechanics.

Despite this enormous new activity geared toward the specific issues of the antifascist war, *Mujeres Libres* managed to maintain both their focus on the emancipation of women, and their focus on promoting an anarchist revolution and implementing anarchist practices in every day life. Here lies what is perhaps the most impressive and unique characteristic of *Mujeres Libres*. They avoided the tendency toward co-optation to which the AMA and the CNT-FAI succumbed. Within their own activities, they maintained their original emphases, and in relating to these other groups, they refused to compromise.

In the same report that stated the new direction taken by the Madrid

group of *Mujeres Libres*, their continuation of original activities was also affirmed: "Now, since these sections are all installed and working, we shall devote more attention to the cultural questions. Shortly, a course of elementary instructions will commence, which are very much needed. Later, we shall continue with lectures on science, social and economic questions."<sup>37</sup> In contrast with the outlook of other women's organizations, *Mujeres Libres* continued to insist that, "In the midst of all the sacrifices with the ultimate will and persistence, we are working to find ourselves, and to situate ourselves in an atmosphere which, until today, has been denied us: social action."<sup>38</sup> In the 21 *semanas despues de la guerra* (December 1936) issue of the *Mujeres Libres* magazine, an article by American anarchist Emma Goldman was published stating that "It is certain that there can be no real emancipation while one individual continues to dominate another or while one class oppresses another. Still less possible is the emancipation of the human race while one sex dominates the other."<sup>39</sup> This insistence on emphasizing women's liberation is also visible in their relations to the CNT. Viewing themselves as full participants in the revolutionary struggle, they wanted to be in an alliance with the main anarcho-syndicalist organization. In October 1938, they proposed to the CNT that they be recognized as an autonomous group within the anarchist movement with the same status as organizations such as the FAI or FIJL (Federation Iberica de Juventudes Libertarias/the youth organization). This proposal was rejected according to Mary Nash<sup>40</sup>, due to the belief that "a specifically women's organization would inject an element of disunion and inequality within the libertarian movement, and would have negative consequences for the development of working class interests."<sup>41</sup> This refusal also meant that *Mujeres Libres* members were banned from the next national congress as delegates of the organization. Previous to this refusal, the CNT had offered *Mujeres Libres* support on the condition that they work on the same projects as the CNT and toward the same goals or, in other words, become a women's auxiliary. At a meeting with the CNT national secretary, Mariano Vazquez, Mercedes Comaposada and Lucia Sanchez Saornil tried to come to an understanding on the issue: "we explained again and again what we were doing; that we were not trying to pull women away from the CNT but, in fact, trying to create a situation in which they could deal with their specific issues as women so that they could then be effective activists in the libertarian movement." Ariano would only consent to supporting them on the condition that they "also work on issues that are of interest to us [the CNT], and not just on women's issues." Lucia's response was to say "No. That would put us back into exactly the position we started from—the reason we started this organization in the first place!" Mercedes agreed: "The autonomy was essential." Why was the CNT not able to accept this? According to Martha Ackelsberg, "the project was clearly too threatening."<sup>42</sup> The FAI and the FIJL may have had specific goals and activities of their own, but they posed no challenge to the established anarchist movement. If *Mujeres Libres* had been accepted as

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an autonomous member of the CNT like FAI and the FIJL, many of their actions would have been in direct opposition to a historical power structure of the anarchist movement. They explicitly and specifically challenged the dominance which men had enjoyed for generations.

Mujeres Libres also resisted incorporation into the AMA. Such a union would have resulted in deemphasizing, if not abandoning, their anarchism. The AMA had repeatedly invited Mujeres Libres to join their organization. These offers were refused by Mujeres Libres as a whole and by almost all the local groups. Mujeres Libres refused to give up their revolutionary goals for the sake of forming a united front. As Lucia Sanchez Saornil put it, "Mujeres Libres is not interested in 'feminine unity,' because that does not represent anything. We have called a thousand times for political and syndical unity, the only kind of unity that truly contributes to the cause...."<sup>43</sup> She also wrote in a Mujeres Libres report that "isolated and purely feminine activity is now impossible," and that everything must be seen "from the angle of comprehensive human aspirations for emancipation, which can be realized only in a social Revolution."<sup>44</sup> Mujeres Libres also retained their anarchism structurally as the organization expanded. At their height, they consisted of 147 local groups throughout Republican Spain. As a national federation, it maintained a decentralized structure with local, regional and national committees up until the Fascist victory.

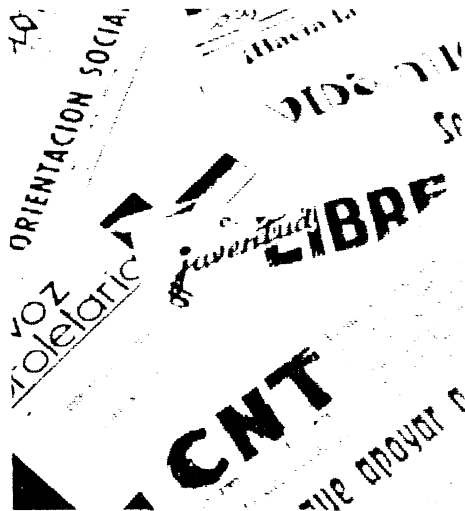
## Epilogue

Over the past fifty years, numerous books, pamphlets and articles have been published about the anarchist revolution that underlay the Spanish Civil War. While the manifestations of these revolutionary activities were inescapable in Republican Spain, they were largely unheard of by the rest of the world until after the war was over and the Revolution was crushed. The suppressed story of the collectivization of industry, the expropriation of land, the anarchist militias, the abandonment of hierarchical social formalities, and the general dispersion of capitalist and statist powers into popular, self-government has now been largely revealed. And yet practically none of the publications documenting such events mentions the specific revolutionary activities of women. To not deliberately expose and discuss these activities is to accept subordination of women which continued throughout this period, to dismiss it as insignificant, and to belittle the actions which were taken towards the emancipation of women. Although several publications have appeared that are devoted to exposing this obscured aspect of the Spanish Revolution, it is obviously not widely considered an integral part of this revolutionary period.

The concrete accomplishments both of the CNT-FAI and of Mujeres Libres were tragically obliterated except in the pages of historical texts. Their value now, is what we may learn from them, and in the case of Mujeres Libres, this value has yet to be acknowledged and appreciated. The lessons of Mujeres

Libres remain relevant and pertinent to both anarchism and feminism today. Perhaps more important than their actual accomplishments, is the lasting integrity of their philosophy. Their refusal to subordinate their aspirations for the sake of a false unity against a lesser evil contrasts with the CNT's collaboration with the Republican government and the AMA's collaboration with the Popular Front. What were originally the primary goals of these groups became secondary issues to be dealt with after the war. Mujeres Libres, though even they were not able to escape completely from patriarchal practices, consistently refused to make such compromises. Not only did they remain entirely separate from the Republican government, but they also remained autonomous from the popular feminist and anarchist organizations. The women of Mujeres Libres denounced and refused to take part in the type of feminism which aims only to 'feminize' the authoritarian and hierarchical structures of society. They also refused to become allied with another women's organization simply on the grounds that it was made up of women. Feminism today tends to fall into both of these superficial philosophies. On the one hand, it promotes and glorifies the career woman who asserts herself by proudly entering into the degradation and dehumanization of capitalist professionalism. On the other hand, it chants slogans of "international sisterhood" aimed at stirring up liberationist sentiments. Such slogans assume that all women are necessarily and fundamentally in solidarity with each other thereby reinforcing their separation from men, and ignoring the multitudes of authoritarian and fascist women past and present. Mujeres Libres, however, did not swing in the opposite direction and deny the importance of having a separate group for women geared toward overcoming the specific elements of their subordination. 'Revolutionary' movements have historically viewed women's subordination as an issue to be dealt with 'later'. This view is not surprising when found in communist and Marxist theory which tends to put all revolutionary activities off until this mythical point in time. In the words of Mercedes Comaposada, "The great revolutionaries—Clara Zetkin, Alexandra Kollontai, Rosa Luxemburg—all tried to do something with women. But they all found out that, from within a party, within an existing revolutionary organization, it's impossible. I remember reading for example, of a letter from Lenin to Clara Zetkin in which he says to her, 'Yes, all this you're talking about the emancipation of women is very good. A very fine goal. But for later.' The interests of a party always come before those of women."<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, this has held true within the anarchist organizations too. This has become less so, but the necessity of explicitly addressing patriarchy within anarchist organizations and helping women empower themselves separately still must be stressed. The lack of attention devoted to the discussion of women in recent texts published on the Spanish Revolution by prominent anarchist historians<sup>46</sup> is proof of this. Such neglect perpetuates a male-oriented view of anarchist history that alienates women while also implicitly condoning patriarchy within anarchist groups today.

The spirit that motivated women to create Mujeres Libres is a rare and



invaluable one. They insisted that the process of establishing an anarchist society must equally include men and women; that to allow men to establish a society in which women may be free is tantamount to allowing a centralized government to establish a society in which people may govern themselves. They recognized the word 'later' as synonymous with 'never'. They also avoided the common trap of making philosophical compromises in order to increase the size of a revolutionary movement and, ostensibly, its strength. Such compromises, they realized, only serve to weaken and falsify any revolutionary effort. The participants become compelled to subscribe to the party line and, therefore, cease to be participants and become followers. Succumbing to this danger "means that the tougher, dominant ideology triumphs by default: authoritarianism wins over libertarian socialism, male domination over women's liberation."<sup>47</sup> The women of Mujeres Libres acknowledged this danger and deliberately set out to avoid and triumph over it. Throughout their existence, they continued "To ascend without respite and without rest."<sup>48</sup>

*Mujeres Libertarias, an organization which was inspired by the original Mujeres Libres, can be contacted at: Mujeres Libertarias, C/. Almagre, 28 - Piso 2., 28010-Madrid, Spain, or, C/. Marques de Falces 5, 18001-Granada, Spain).*

## Endnotes:

- 1) Martha Ackelsberg, "Revolution and Community: Mobilization, De-politization and Perceptions of Change in Civil War Spain," *Women Living Change* Ed. Susan C. Bourque and Donna Robinson Divine (Philadelphia: 1985) p.65.
- 2) Temma Kaplan, "Female Consciousness and the Case of Barcelona 1910-1918," *Signs* 7.31 (1982): p.565.
- 3) Sam Dolgoff, *The Anarchist Collectives* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1974) p.20.
- 4) Dolgoff, xviii.
- 5) Martha Ackelsberg, "Separate and Equal?" *Mujeres Libres and Anarchist Strategy for Women's Emancipation*, *Feminist Studies* 11.1 (1985): p.76.
- 6) Temma Kaplan, "Spanish Anarchism and Women's Liberation," *Journal of Contemporary History* 16.2 (1971): p.104.
- 7) Ackelsberg, *Feminist Studies* p.76.
- 8) Ackelsberg, *Feminist Studies* 66.
- 9) Liz Willis, *Women in the Spanish Revolution* (New York: The Lower Depths, no copyright) p.15.
- 10) Willis, p.17.
- 11) Martha Ackelsberg, "Women and the Politics of the Spanish Popular Front: Political Mobilization or Social Revolution?", *International Labor and Working Class History* 30 (1986) p.7.
- 12) George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961) p.7.
- 13) Ackelsberg, *ILWCH* p.8.
- 14) Ackelsberg, *ILWCH* p.8.
- 15) Daniel Guerin, *Anarchism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970) p.128.
- 16) Guerin, p.128.
- 17) Dolgoff, p.42.
- 18) Dolgoff, p.53.
- 19) Camilo Berneri, "Open Letter to Federica Montseny," *Spain and the World* 4 June 1937: p.4.
- 20) Willis, p.5.
- 21) Ackelsberg, *Living Change* p.94.

22) Franz Borkenau is the author of *The Spanish Cockpit* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963).

- 23) Willis, p.9.
- 24) Ackelsberg, *Feminist Studies* p.76.
- 25) Ackelsberg, *Feminist Studies* p.63.
- 26) Ackelsberg, *Feminist Studies* p.68.
- 27) Martha Ackelsberg, "Mujeres Libres: Individuality and Community," *Radical America* 7.2-3 (1984) p.12.
- 28) Ackelsberg, *Feminist Studies* p.75.
- 29) Ackelsberg, *Radical America* p.14.
- 30) Ackelsberg, *Radical America* p.11.
- 31) Mujeres Libres, "Report from the Madrid Group of Mujeres Libres," *Spain and the World* 25 August 1937: p.1.
- 32) Ackelsberg, *Radical America* p.7.
- 33) Ackelsberg, *Feminist Studies* p.74.
- 34) Ackelsberg, *Feminist Studies* p.71.
- 35) Ackelsberg, *Feminist Studies* p.71.
- 36) Mujeres Libres, p.1.
- 37) Mujeres Libres, p.1.
- 38) Ackelsberg, *Feminist Studies* p.73.
- 39) Kaplan, *Contemporary History* p.106.
- 40) Mary Nash is the author of "Mujeres Libres" *Espana, 1936-1939* (Barcelona: Tusquets, 1976) along with several articles documenting Mujeres Libres and working class women's activity in early 20th century Spain.
- 41) Ackelsberg, *Feminist Studies* p.77.
- 42) Ackelsberg, *Feminist Studies* p.79.
- 43) Ackelsberg, *ILWCH* p.9.
- 44) Mujeres Libres, p.1.
- 45) Ackelsberg, *Radical America* p.12.
- 46) for example: Sam Dolgoff's *The Anarchist Collectives*, Gaston Leval's *Collectives in the Spanish Revolution* and Jose Peirats' *Anarchists in the Spanish Revolution*
- 47) Willis, p.27.
- 48) Mujeres Libres, "Ascender Sin Tregua y Sin Apoyo," *Mujeres Libres* 10:1.

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## ANARCHISM and GENDER

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obedience. More promising from an anarchist point of view are the efforts of people with AIDS and their allies to build an independent network of treatment facilities, alternative testing sites, community research initiatives, and hospices. People with AIDS are seeking out a variety of treatment options, including herbal and holistic methods, and creating alternative channels for obtaining drugs that are mired in the red tape of the FDA approval and testing process. Several groups distribute clean needles to IV drug users in states where sale and possession are illegal (sharing used needles is one of the most effective means of HIV transmission). The rate of AIDS transmission has decreased among gay men due to safer sex education programs that have been developed and implemented by members of the gay community, even as government officials sat on their hands afraid to utter the word 'condom'.

Women and sexual minorities have played a crucial role in the struggle for reproductive rights and the fight against AIDS, and increasing numbers are eager to adopt strategies that go beyond petitioning the state. This momentum comes, in part, from an ingrained hatred of the government telling us how to live our lives. We have long resented the powers-that-be for telling us what we can do in bed, and now they are encroaching on our right to make other choices concerning our bodies. Anarchists of all genders and orientations are taking part in these movements as well. More cohesive alliances can continue to be made, so that knowledge, resources, and successful strategies can be shared, and so that we may gain strength through increased numbers.

### To Label or Not to Label

Why are some people eager to adopt, and even seek out identity labels, while others shy away from them? People may take on a group identity for a variety of reasons. These include positive associations and admiration for those who belong to the group, and the existence of a community that can provide solidarity and support. Labels may be used as political tools, as a way to make a statement or to make connections with others.

Why do some people reject labels? Specific labels may be rejected because of the lack of positive associations, role models, or communities. Another powerful discouragement is the fear of coming out in the face of a hostile society. Still another is that labels may lead to false alliances. Some people, unfortunately, insist that those who share a label should always support one another, even though they may have conflicting politics and agendas (for example, the idea that gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals should automatically vote for a gay candidate, even if a heterosexual candidate has more progressive views and policies); this is especially a problem for those who have conflicting allegiances to more than one group. Conversely, we should be careful not to reject potential friends and allies because we do not share a label, especially since the definition underlying the label can be so imprecise. Other people

reject the very idea of labels in principle as being too simplistic, and because labels allow us to view others as collections of traits and stereotypes rather than as complex and unique human beings.

What can marginalized groups achieve by the use of labels? Accepting a label that is despised can be an empowering experience, and take some of the power to hurt away from an oppressor; this is the idea behind Queer Nation's reclaiming of the word 'queer'. By openly adopting a label, we may encourage others to come out of their closets and to take pride in who they are. Identifying with a group can be a good way to meet others with similar ideas and goals. Finally, wearing a label is an important means of education. Many people fear or dislike those associated with certain labels because they are different, subversive, or 'deviant'. If more of us openly acknowledged our identities, it would become apparent just how common some forms of subversion and 'deviance' really are!

### Conclusion

Anarchism and gender/sexual orientation politics can mesh to form a cohesive world view. Anarchism advocates the eradication of hierarchy, whether it be government over individuals, men over women, heterosexuals over non-heterosexuals. Transsexuality and bisexuality, which call into question accepted reified categories, encourages us to view

the world as fluid rather than compartmentalized. Anarchists and gender/orientation minorities challenge traditional sex roles and relationship models.

In thinking about gender and sexual orientation politics, we cannot ignore men and heterosexuals. They, too, are diminished by the constraints of traditional roles. Although men and heterosexuals have privileges in our society, many progressive men and heterosexuals choose to reject these privileges in favor of expanded options for self-expression and the desire for more fully human, egalitarian relationships. Many of the privileges men and heterosexuals have in this society are economic privileges within the patriarchal capitalist system which most anarchists seek to overthrow. The majority of heterosexuals have never known the joyful feeling of liberated sexuality that gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals experience at a gay pride march. By blindly taking on the roles and behaviors dictated by society, one loses the opportunity to feel the pride and security of an identity that comes from seriously examining one's options and adopting the gender role or sexual orientation that is right for that person. Anarchist men need not "refuse to be men," but can instead redefine what being a man (or heterosexual) means.

Anarchism, anarchy-feminism, queer liberation politics, and sexual liberation politics all emphasize our right to control our own lives and our own bodies. This includes the right to love who we

### The ideology of ideologies

Continued from page 9

chist ideas. Walford maintains a pretense of sympathy for the ideologies of libertarian socialism and anarchism, all the while undermining most genuinely libertarian impulses with arguments that assume anarchy is essentially impossible by nature!

The backbone of Walford's "systematic ideology" is his mechanically conceived progression or series of primary ideologies, which he divides into two classes, the 'eidostatic' and the 'eidodynamic' ideologies. 'Eidostatic' is Walsby's academic neologism for *ruling* ideologies, while 'eidodynamic' is his codeword for *radical* or *revolutionary* ideologies. The eidostatic and eidodynamic ideologies are further divided into a range which runs from the non-political through conservatism and liberalism, to socialism, communism and anarchism.

In fact, this ideological series amounts to a sort of pidgin philosophy of political history, since Walford assigns each ideology to its own historical period, beginning with the non-political 'expediency' of primitives, moving to the conservatism of 'principle' of the empires and the 'precise' liberalism of the modern nation-state. The revolutionary theories (of 'reform', 'revolt' and 'repudiation') also figure in this progression, though generally only in an impossible ideal future.

To this ideological series of broad categories, Walford also attaches several relationships which he claims correlate with it either directly or inversely as the case may be. Thus, for example, he explains that the more eidodynamic (radical) ideologies oppose "private ownership, togetherness(!), economic competition, institutional religion, hierarchy, authority, low valuation of theory, respect for success in life, [and] willingness to defend the national group" (*Beyond* p.101), and the farther along the ideology is in his mechanical series, the more it opposes these 'eidostatic' values. Obviously, some of

these will correlate, since a few are tied rather directly to the very definitions of the radical theories Walford deals with. But just as obviously, some of these have no necessary connection with any particular ideologies or group of ideologies. Yet Walford never lets such details get in his way. In fact, when he demonstrates a single (usually erroneous) counterexample to what he conceives as the accepted wisdom in anarchist circles, he generally takes it as sufficient to destroy any view he opposes—while his own views are so porous that counterexamples can be found by the dozen.

Since the "ideology of anarchism" is at the extreme, idealistic end of Walford's ideological series, when he speaks of anarchist theory and history some of his most bizarre prejudices are revealed. For example, Walford makes much of his unsupported generalization that those holding eidostatic (ruling) ideologies "value practice and experience above theory as guides to action." (*Beyond* p.107) And according to his scheme of things, since anarchists are at the extreme end of his mechanical series, they are the most impractical idealists of all! For this supposed anarchist sympathizer, attempting to create an anarchist world is like having "human beings subsisting without food, air, or earth to stand on." This is because any attempt at practical or positive action always "fall short of, or contradicts, anarchist principles." (*Beyond* p.123)

It doesn't take a genius to realize that Walford repeatedly mistakes the idealized characteristics 'predicted' by the mechanical logic of his ideological series for the actual characteristics of really existing anarchists. Thus, for Walford, the entire anarchist revolution in Spain is a figment of anarchists' imaginations! He devotes an appendix in *Beyond Politics* to use some of the contradictions within the Spanish movement to 'explain' that it wasn't an anarchist movement anyway, because authoritarian elements were able to separate themselves from the rest of the movement and gain varying degrees of power during the war. However accurate his description might be as a critique of the

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choose, to dress as we wish, to create alternative family and relationship structures, and to make our own decisions about reproduction. All of us, regardless of gender or orientation, can benefit from the increased range of options and the greater freedom that will be the result of a more open and liberated society.

**Acknowledgment.** Thanks to Lucy Friedland, who was the co-author with me of a paper entitled "The Fine Art of Labelling: The Convergence of Anarchism, Feminism, and Bisexuality," which appeared in *Bi Any Other Name: Bisexual People Speak Out*, Lani Kaahumanu and Lorraine Hutchins (eds.), Alyson Publications, Boston, MA, 1990, which formed the basis of this essay.

Spanish movement, however, doesn't eliminate the anarchic actions of millions of revolutionaries during this difficult time.

Like the "end of ideology" arguments which became fashionable in academia in the 1950s, Walford's "systematic ideology" functions effectively as a stick to club unruly radical ideas into civilized pigeon-holes where it is hoped they won't be as likely to cause any damage to ruling ideas and practices. Walford maintains that "the ideological system is so integrated as to be self-adjusting, self-correcting, self-stabilizing, and it tends towards a condition in which the influence of each major ideology diminishes as it stands closer to the anarchist end of the range." (*Beyond* p.134) And this is exactly why genuine anarchists have no stake in Walford's ideology of ideologies. What is the real point of books whose essential message is that we are all condemned to suffer under conditions of slavery of one sort or another, whatever we do? Even if, in fact, no one succeeds in abolishing institutions social and political domination, does this mean that people should never have tried to do so? In his academic terminology, the "eidodynamics...want to cut off the branch they are sitting on." (p.134) But he's got it a bit wrong. If they have any sense, they'll just want to cut off the stick he's beating them with.

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# Regaining Control:

## Taking health care into our own hands

*Editors' Note: The following essay is reproduced for informational purposes only from an anonymous pamphlet published by anarchist feminists in Boston. We recommend that extreme care be taken before subjecting oneself to any type of health care regimen, especially including care provided by licensed physicians, or any others who exploit illness or reproductive processes for high profits. However, 'free' information always needs to be handled with care as well. It is almost always worthwhile to get second opinions from trusted sources if one has any questions about modes of care.*

**T**oday in America, our right to control our bodies is under attack. Religious groups and conservative politicians are eroding our freedom to make our own decisions about reproductive health. Soon the Supreme Court will hear more cases which could have grave implications for reproductive rights. Growing, militant anti-abortion groups such as Operation Rescue are staging increasingly frequent attacks on women's clinics. Despite the fact that abortion is now legal, it is inaccessible to many women, especially those who are poor or young. Many women are unaware of or unable to take advantage of their reproductive options due to geographical isolation or a lack of knowledge due to a morally repressive atmosphere.

It is important that we begin to educate and organize to take control of our bodies. We can learn about alternative abortion techniques and establish services such as the Jane Collective, an underground network of abortion providers in Chicago in the early 1970s. There are many concerned health care workers who could be allies in such a program. We can establish support networks for teenagers who must leave their homes or deal with the court system to obtain abortions. We can educate ourselves about alternative means of contraception and abortion such as traditional herbal methods. Much of this knowledge is kept alive by women in Native American and immigrant communities, and is being reclaimed by midwives, witches, and herbal healers, and by those seeking to develop health care outside the control of the medical establishment and the state. We can initiate independent research, production and distribution of new drugs, such as the early abortifacient pill RU-486, which is currently being used effectively in France and China, but is denied women in this country due to anti-abortion boycott threats and the fear of liability lawsuits.

While it is necessary to demand that the government respect the right to reproductive freedom, we cannot rely solely on the state. Legislators have a poor record of accountability on reproductive rights issues, and Supreme

Court justices are accountable to no one. Reproductive freedom is too crucial to be left to the state. We must claim for ourselves the fundamental right of reproductive choice, and take our health care and control of our lives into our own hands.

### Are you pregnant?

There are many things other than pregnancy that can make you miss a menstrual period, including stress, poor diet, lack of sleep, or an interrupted schedule. If you have not had a pregnancy test, do not assume you are definitely pregnant.

Common early signs of pregnancy (1-2 weeks after conception) are: 1) missing a period; 2) a period with less bleeding or lasting for fewer days than usual; 3) swelling, tenderness, and/or tingling in the breasts; 4) frequent urination; 5) fatigue; 6) nausea or vomiting (morning sickness); 7) feeling bloated and/or crampy; 8) increase or decrease in appetite; 9) changes in digestion (heartburn or constipation); 10) mood changes. Signs of pregnancy may vary.

Pregnancy tests are available through many clinics and medical practitioners. Family planning and women's health services often offer anonymous free pregnancy testing. Look under "Preg-

nancy Services" in the yellow pages. Some centers advertising free pregnancy tests (such as Birthright) are actually fronts for anti-abortion groups. Well known centers such as Planned Parenthood may be the most reliable choice.

You can buy home pregnancy testing kits in drug stores for about \$10. These tests are easy to perform, but give false results more often than lab tests.

Most of the tests used by clinics, as well as home tests, are urine tests. These are accurate for most women when a period is about 13 days late. Laboratory blood tests which can detect pregnancy as early as 7-12 days after conception are available, but may be expensive.

### Pregnancy Termination

If you are pregnant, you have several options. Many women choose to terminate their pregnancies. While the decision to have an abortion is not an easy one, it is important to be aware of all available options.

Most abortions performed today are surgical abortions using the suction or D&C method. Abortions are currently legally available, but are expensive, and women who are poor, underage, or outside of urban centers may have trouble obtaining them. Abortion laws

vary from state to state.

Surgical abortions are safest when performed within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy (the first trimester). For information about obtaining an abortion, contact the National Women's Health Network (202-543-9222) or the National Abortion Federation (800-772-9100), or look in the yellow pages under "Pregnancy Services." If you are a teenager, some of the services in your area may be able to help if you need a court hearing to comply with parental consent laws.

### Alternative abortions methods

There are many alternatives to surgical abortion. These vary in safety and effectiveness. The following guidelines are applicable to all alternative methods. Whenever possible, consult with someone who is familiar with the technique you plan to use.

#### General Guidelines

1) The earlier these methods are used, the more effective they will be. It is best to use them between the first day you expect your period and the 10th day after it is due. Effectiveness will decrease significantly after this time.

2) Alternative methods are most useful for women with regular menstrual cycles. It is important to be familiar with your cycle as part of an overall program of reproductive health. You can determine your monthly cycle by charting it on a calendar over a period of time.

3) If these methods are not successful and you carry the pregnancy to term, or if you are breastfeeding, the effects on the fetus or infant are not known.

4) Start with a small dosage (to check for side effects) and move up to the full dosage in small increments if there are no adverse effects. Do not take more than the recommended dosage, or for longer than the recommended duration. This will not increase the effectiveness, but may greatly increase the risk of serious side effects.

5) Do not use these methods if you have high blood pressure, epilepsy, allergies, diabetes, heart or kidney problems, or other health concerns, or if you are taking any drugs; these may aggravate existing medical problems or dangerously alter the way the method would normally work.

6) Do not use these methods if you have an IUD or if you have had a recent uterine or pelvic infection. These methods are ineffective if your period does not come while you are taking birth control pills.

7) These methods are not for contraception. Do not take them on a regular basis. Long term effects of prolonged use are not known.



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8) Some side effects may be expected, such as nausea or short term vomiting or diarrhea, and cramps and moderate bleeding. If you develop severe side effects such as convulsions, persistent vomiting or diarrhea, or severe bleeding (needing to use more than one pad in 15 minutes), stop using the method immediately and seek medical care from a trained professional or the nearest hospital emergency room.

9) Stop using the method once your period starts, but continue if you only have spotting.

10) All abortion methods entail the risk of incomplete abortion. If possible, have backup access to surgical abortion in case the alternative method fails. To reduce the risk or infection after any abortion, do not use tampons for bleeding; use only menstrual pads.

### Herbal Methods

Women have used herbs throughout the ages for abortion. This knowledge has been passed down through traditional practitioners. Herbal methods should not be used casually. They can be extremely dangerous if used improperly. It is important to be aware of your body and its reactions to the treatment. Learn as much as you can about the plants you wish to use. Herbs have varying effects on different women. It is important to get the advice of someone who has had experience using them. You may be able to locate an herbalist in your area through women's centers, health food stores, or spirituality resources.

Most herbs are used by brewing them as a tea. This is done by pouring boiling water over the herbs and letting them sit in a closed container for the recommended amount of time (water should be boiled in a covered, non-aluminum container). Strain the tea before drinking; do not eat the leaves, as they may be poisonous. Use only the recommended part of the plant. Whole herbs should not be confused with herbal tinctures or herbal essential oils. Oils can cause convulsions and death. Herbs can be found in health food stores and spiritual shops. Check the Latin name, since common names may vary.

The herbs below are the ones we found the most information about, and which seem to be most commonly used. Much of our data is from a report by a group of women in Europe who have been using these herbs successfully in an alternative abortion practice. We have verified the information as thoroughly as we could using a variety of sources.

The best results are reported to occur when using two plants in combination, one from List A and one from List B. The best combination seems to be pennyroyal and blue cohosh. Do not combine two herbs from the same list.

### List A

**Pennyroyal** (*Hedeoma pulegiodes*, also known as American pennyroyal, mosquito plant, squaw mint, tickweed)

*Part of plant:* whole plant; do not use oil.

*Recipe:* pour 1 cup boiling water over 1 teaspoon of dried herb, let steep for 15-20 minutes.

*Dose:* 1 cup, three times a day.

*Duration:* 6 days maximum.

*Side effects:* nausea, numbness of fingers and toes, sweating, dizziness, head-



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ache; pennyroyal oil may cause convulsions and death.

**Mugwort** (*Artemisia vulgaris*)

*Part of plant:* leaves or flowers.

*Recipe:* pour 1 cup boiling water over 1 teaspoon of dried herb, let steep for 15-20 minutes.

*Dose:* 1 cup, three times a day.

*Duration:* 6 days maximum.

*Side effects:* sweating, nausea.

**Cotton root bark** (*Gossypium*)

*Part of plant:* root (use only organically grown cotton root; commercially grown cotton contains dangerous pesticides).

*Recipe:* boil 1 ounce of root in 1 pint of water, leave to stand for 8 hours, dilute the resulting liquid with water: 1 teaspoon liquid to one cup of water.

*Dose:* 1 cup, three times a day.

*Duration:* 6 days maximum.

*Side effects:* nausea, vomiting.

### List B

**Black Cohosh** (*Cimicifuga racemosa*, also known as black snakeroot, bugbane, rattleweed, squawroot)

*Part of plant:* (a) root or (b) tincture (buy pre-made).

*Recipe:* boil 1 oz. root in water, leave to stand for 10 minutes, dilute the resulting liquid with water: 1 teaspoon liquid to one cup of water.

*Dose:* (a) 1 cup, three times a day (b) 5 drops, 3 times a day.

*Duration:* 6 days maximum for root or tincture.

*Side effects:* drowsiness, increased urination, nausea, vomiting, headache.

**Blue Cohosh** (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*, also known as beechdrops, blue ginseng, squawroot)

*Part of plant:* root

*Recipe:* boil 1 oz. root in water, leave to stand for 10 minutes, dilute the resulting liquid with water: 1 teaspoon liquid to one cup of water.

*Dose:* 1 cup, three times a day.

*Duration:* 6 days maximum.

*Side effects:* drowsiness, increased urination, nausea, vomiting, headache.

### Other herbs

Many other herbs are reported to bring about abortion (for example, parsley, tansy, yarrow). We found less information about these herbs, and much of it is inconsistent. If you want to learn more about them, consult an herbalist who has had experience with herbal abortions.

**Rue** (*Ruta graveolens*)

*Part of plant:* (a) leaves (b) tincture (buy pre-made).

*Recipe:* (a) pour 1/2 cup boiling water over 1 teaspoon dried herb, let sit for 15 minutes

*Dose:* (a) 1/2 cup a day (b) 10 drops, 4 times a day

*Duration:* 4 days

*Side effects:* nausea, vomiting

### For Excessive Bleeding

When using any abortion method, there is a risk of severe bleeding. Shepherd's Purse will reduce bleeding. Keep it on hand when using alternative abortion techniques.

**Shepherd's Purse** (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*)

*Part of plant:* tincture (buy pre-made).

*Dose:* a few drops, applied under the tongue.

*Duration:* repeat at 15 minute intervals; if heavy bleeding (more than one pad in 15 minutes) persists for more than 30 mins, seek medical care.

### Non-Herbal Methods

The following information concerns non-herbal techniques that have been used to induce abortion.

#### Vitamin C

Vitamin C is the safest of all methods listed. Drink plenty of liquids while taking Vitamin C to reduce stress of the kidneys (Vitamin C should not be used by women with kidney problems). Unlike the herbal methods, some sources have reported Vitamin C to be effective up to 6 weeks after a missed period, although it is most effective when used early. Vitamin C should be taken 1/2 hour before meals. Vitamin C is unlikely to induce abortion in women who take large doses regularly. Vitamin C can be purchased in powder or pill form in health food and drug stores. Vitamin C may be combined with herbal methods.

*Dose:* 1 gram, 6 times a day

*Duration:* 5 days

*Side effects:* diarrhea, nausea

### Additional Methods

The following methods can be used either alone or with herbal methods or Vitamin C. The effectiveness of these methods is not clear, but some women have reported them to be useful.

#### Reflexology

Focus in the region of the uterus.

Massage the ankle just below the ankle bone. Use your thumb held vertically to massage the bottom edge of the bone. The pressure must be deep and firm. Massage 5 minutes per foot several times a day. Deep, prolonged massage of the belly by a trained person may also bring about abortion.

#### Acupuncture/Acupressure

Acupuncture must be done by someone who knows the appropriate technique. The Needle Spleen Pancreas (SP6) and Colon (C4) sites on both the left and right side are used. The needles should remain in for 30 minutes, during which time they should be stimulated every 2 minutes by turning them in a clockwise direction. Contractions should begin during the next hour or the following night. Acupressure should also be done by a trained person.

#### Hot Baths

Hot baths are often mentioned as a method of inducing early abortion. Their effectiveness may be due to the heat, or to relaxation and stress reduction.

#### Menstrual Extraction

Menstrual extraction is an alternative abortion technique developed by the Los Angeles Self Help Clinic in 1971, prior to the legalization of abortion. The procedure is similar to a suction abortion, and is done within the first six weeks of pregnancy. This technique involves specialized, sterile equipment and a knowledgeable support group. All mechanical abortion methods carry a risk of injury and infection, and should be done in a sanitary location by trained persons. Because this technique is complicated, we will not describe it here. Menstrual extraction is a method to explore if you are interested in alternative abortion services. An herbalist or a women's health care worker in your area may be able to give you more information.

*The authors of this pamphlet are a group of Boston area anarchy-feminists dedicated to the idea of putting health care back into our own hands. Our members include a physician assistant, and we have consulted an herbalist and a variety of resources. This essay is solely the work of the authors, and no organization or publication mentioned bears any responsibility for its contents.*

*Because of the difficulty of finding information on alternative abortion techniques, we cannot guarantee their effectiveness. We may be able to provide further information or contacts in your area. Please share with us your experience using these methods, as well as any other knowledge you may have: P.O. Box 634, Cambridge, MA 02142*

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# There is no 'natural' Human Sexuality

By Ruth Hubbard



The circumstances that arouse our sexual feelings and the ways in which we express them are structured by the society in which we live, and have changed over time. There is no 'natural' human sexuality. Historically in the West, sexuality has been linked with reproduction. This arises out of the Christian equation of sexuality with sin that must be redeemed through reproduction. It results in the invalidation of all forms of sexual expression and enjoyment other than heterosexuality. To fulfill the Christian mandate, sexuality always should be intended for reproduction. Actually, in our day, just plain heterosexuality will do, irrespective of reproductive consequences.

This sets up a major contradiction in the way we initiate children to sexuality and reproduction. We teach them that sex and sexuality are about having babies and warn them that they must not explore sex until they are old enough to be mummies and daddies. Then, when they reach adolescence and the more 'enlightened' among us teach them how to be sexually (meaning heterosexually) active without becoming mummies and daddies. Surprise: it doesn't work very well. Teenagers do not act 'responsibly'—teenage pregnancy and abortion are on the rise. Somewhere, we forget that we have been teaching lies: sexuality and reproduction are not linked in 'advanced', 'developed' societies. Youngsters are expected to be heterosexually active from their teens on, but to put off having children until they are economically independent and married, and even then to have only two or, at most, three children.

Other contradictions: this society accepts, on the whole, Freud's assumption that children are sexual from birth and that in childhood society channels polymorphously perverse sexuality into socially acceptable forms. Yet we expect our children to be asexual. Furthermore, more than most traditional societies, we raise boys and girls together, while we insist that they must not explore their own sexuality, and especially not each other's.

What if we acknowledged the actual separation of sexuality from reproduction and encouraged our children to

express themselves sexually, if they were so inclined? This would mean that they could explore their own bodies as well as those of friends of the same or the other sex, when they felt like it. It would also mean that they would have some sense of their own and other people's sexual needs, and would know how to talk out these needs with friends and sexual partners before reproduction became an issue for them. Presumably, without the embarrassment of unexplored and unacknowledged sexual needs, contraceptive needs would be much easier to acknowledge and deal with as they arise. So, of course, would same-sex love relationships.

As Steve Jackson has pointed out in *Childhood and Sexuality* this would be especially advantageous for girls, though it would help children and adolescents of both sexes. Boys, in the ordinary course of sexual exploration, discover their penis as an organ of pleasure, and it is also the organ they are taught about when they learn about reproduction. Reproduction and pleasure therefore are linked. Girls exploring themselves find their clitoris, but when they learn about reproduction, the clitoris often goes unacknowledged, and they are taught that their vagina is the organ important for sex and reproduction. According to the American Heritage Dictionary, the vagina is "the passage leading from the external genital orifice [what's an orifice, Mummy?] to the uterus in mammals [what's a mammal, Mummy?]; from Latin *vagina*, sheath [you mean I am a sheath for a penis or a baby, Mummy?]." Therefore, for boys, there is an obvious link between reproduction and their own pleasurable, erotic explorations; for most girls, there isn't.

It should not surprise us that a male-dominated society has constructed sexuality in ways that serve men's sexual needs more than women's. The interesting thing is that when Shere Hite came out with her first *Report*, which said that sexuality, as we have constructed it, doesn't serve women, many women came forward to acclaim her and agree. When she later wrote, in her *Report on Male Sexuality*—that it didn't do so well by men, either, she was dismissed as a charlatan. The analysis I have just described comes to the same conclusions: our construction of sexuality doesn't do well by women or men. But it's harder

on women.

Granted that sexuality is socially constructed, each of us writes her or his own script out of the sum total of our individual experiences. None of this is inborn or biologically given. It is constructed out of our diverse life situations, limited by what we are taught and/or imagine as permissible, correct behavior. There is no "female sexual experience," no "male sexual experience," no unique heterosexual, lesbian, or gay experience. There are instead the different experiences of different people, which we lump according to socially significant categories. Whenever I hear a generalization about the sexual experience of some particular group, exceptions immediately come to mind—except that I refuse to call them exceptions; they are part of the total reality. Of course, some similarities are generated out of the similar social circumstances in which members of groups find themselves, but we tend to exaggerate what exists when we go looking for in-group similarities, or for differences between groups.

This line of thinking is illustrated by the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy, which originated in typologies that were in vogue in late nineteenth century biology, especially in human biology. Behaviors were no longer merely attributes of particular persons; they defined people. A person who had sexual relations with a person of the same sex became a certain kind of person, a 'homosexual'; a person who had sexual relations with people of the other sex, a different kind, a 'heterosexual'. This way of classifying people erased the hitherto accepted fact that many people don't do exclusively one or the other. It created the stereotype which was then popularized by the sex reformers, such as Havelock Ellis, who biologized the supposed difference "The homosexual" became a person who is different by nature and therefore should not be held responsible for her or his so-called deviance. This served the purposes of the reformers (though the laws were slow to change), but it turned same-sex love into a medical problem to be treated by doctors, rather than punished by judges—an improvement, perhaps, but not acceptance or liberation.

This brings us to Freud, who was unusual for his time (and still, to some extent, for ours) in insisting that sexual

development is problematic for everyone and that it is scientifically as valid to ask how a child comes to love people of the other sex as of her or his own. However, he plotted a course of development that involved his newly invented Oedipus complex and castration anxiety to explain how men come to form affective attachments to women and women to men. Loving people of one's own sex continued to be seen as pathological.

Feminist revisioning of Freud by Nancy Chodorow and Dorothy Dinnerstein interprets the course of affective development by putting at the center the child's relationship to the mother rather than to the father. However, since girls' first intense, affective experience is with a person of the *same sex*, whereas for boys it is with a member of the other sex, their description continues to posit a crucial difference between the ways in which girls and boys develop their identities and erotic relationships to members of the opposite sex. Whereas Freud delineated a course that he believed more clear and direct for boys, but more fuzzy and problematic for girls, Chodorow's formulation suggests that male development is more problematic. Girls grow up identifying with their primary care-giver, a woman, and they assume that they will become like her. Boys on the other hand, become men by insisting on being unlike the person who cares for them, whom they know best, who is their first love. And since boys (like girls) usually are not nearly so familiar with a man as they are with the mother (or other primary caretaker, who also usually is a woman), this necessity to differentiate themselves in kind from the primary caretaker engenders a fragility into the male ego that women need not deal with. Surprisingly, neither Chodorow nor Dinnerstein addresses the question of why, in that case, women later form affective ties with men rather than transferring their primary bond from the mother (or other female caretaker) to other women. Their model readily lends itself to the idea that to women and men, love for women comes easily, while love for men is problematic. But they do not explore these implications.

In my own theorizing I don't either, because I am no more comfortable with models that posit a psychological determinism than I am with biodeterminist ones. I find Chodorow's and Dinnerstein's analyses more interesting than Freud's, but no more convincing. Much more realistic to me are the diversity, change, and flexibility in sexuality reported by Kinsey, who emphasized that most people can love people of either sex and that the choices change over time and social circumstances. I do not give much credence to retrospective accounts by some lesbians and gay men who believe that they were born 'different', homosexual. In my teaching, I have sometimes asked students to reflect—out loud, if they wish—about the development of their own early loves and attachments. And, usually, women who think of themselves as heterosexual in that their sexual relationships, as adults, are with men recall strong erotic ties to one or more women or girls during their childhood and adolescence. My point is that if these women were involved in loving relationships with women, they might look to these early loves as 'proof' that they had always been ➡

...The real mistake here, Polly, is imagining that there is a stark division in the human species between gay and not gay. It's nonsense; there is the world of sexual behaviors, and individuals decide, moment-to-moment, what they are going to do and with whom.... 'Gay' is a psychological and sociological abstraction, a useful notion for certain kinds of discussions, but a fiction when you come right down to the level of people and what they choose to do. The idea has caused immense harm; how many people have wasted time agonizing over 'what' they are...am I gay if I feel this way sometimes?...am I really bi, since I was just attracted to a woman?...if I'm gay does that mean that I have to act a certain way now? These questions are an absurd and tragic waste of time....

Excerpted from "Polly Sexual" in *Possessed Autumn*, 1988.



# A few words on Men's Liberation

By Adrian Kollontai

**G**ender politics is not a women's issue; it is an issue that affects all humans caught up in its games. The fact that women have focussed greater attention on gender politics clearly reflects their dissatisfaction with the status quo; theirs are voices crying out against its oppressive values. It is a positive rebellion. But now is the time for men to also look at the general effects of sexism, sexual roles and sex stereotyping, not as a women's issue, but as a pressing human issue that is affecting us all.

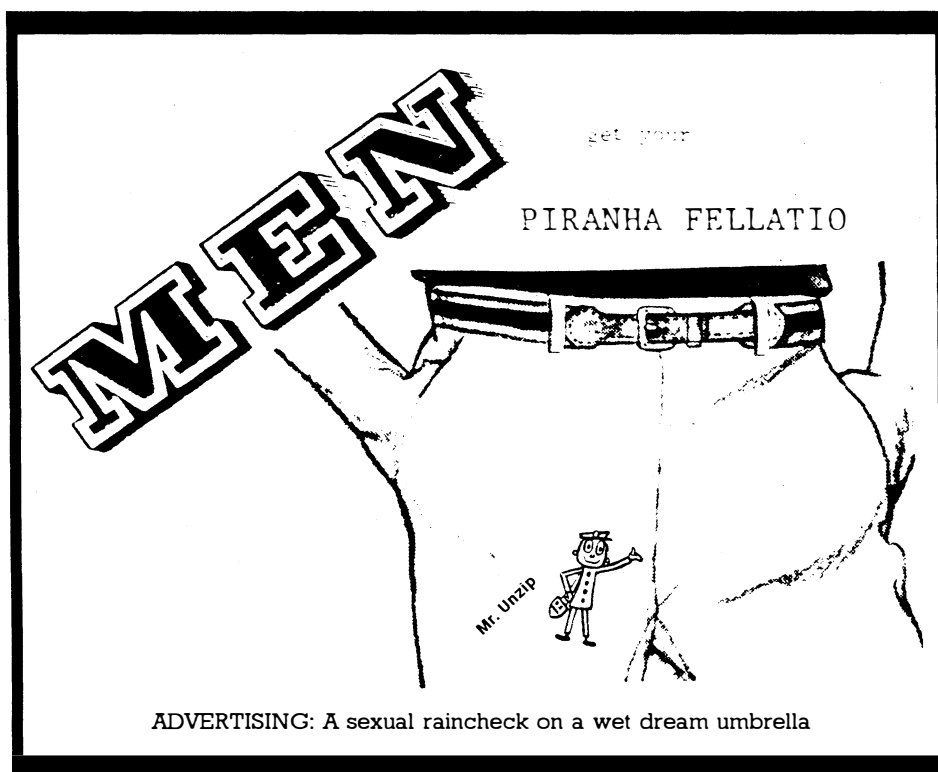
Let all men feel free to wear skirts! There is no joy better than the wind blowing up the thin fabric of a skirt on a summer evening, except perhaps the feel of a lover's hand running up beneath it. The very fact that this has already threatened some male readers, or perhaps the fact that most of you presume I'm certainly a homosexual is indicative of the existence of stringent male sexual roles and gender mores. And why not wear skirts? They are after all merely pieces of functional fabric. Those very same pieces of fabric that men are so quick to admire on shaven-legged women become obscene on a man—and sometimes also on a hairy-legged woman, who, according to sexist society, is often just playing at being male.

Love belongs to the handsome, well built or the wealthy. How many gawky, teenaged boys have wasted precious hours in their backyards working out or have sent away dollars in response to ads promising to make them muscular in just 6 easy weeks? Most of us can never be the man that women dream of. Sexual rituals become an incessant attack on our self esteem. How many men have spent their lives feeling that they just weren't good enough and what has this done to men in our society? Harmonious relations between the genders are not to be found built upon this foundation.

Wealth has its revenge. If a "beautiful" woman is with a short, bald man, one assumes that he is wealthy. The pursuit of wealth, however, is much to the detriment of the pursuit of other

lesbians, while if they relate sexually to men, they may be tempted to devalue them and call them childhood crushes.

I believe that people fall in love with individuals, not with a sex. Even within one sex, most of us prefer certain 'types'; usually not any man or woman will do. It is an interesting question what shapes those preferences. But no one has suggested that something innate makes us light up in the presence of certain men or women. We would think it absurd to look at hormone levels or any other biological phenomenon as the cause for 'type' preference within a sex. In fact, scientists rarely bother to ask what in our psychosocial experience shapes such tastes and preferences. We assume it must have something to do with parents or other early experiences, but don't probe deeply unless our preferences involve the 'wrong' sex. Then, suddenly, we try to pinpoint specific causes from out of the maze of biological, psychological, and social experiences that make us the people we are at a given time in our lives. Because of our recent history and political experiences, feminists have an easier time accepting this line of reasoning than many other people do. Many women who have thought of



*data (POB 33, Stillwater, PA. 17878).*

human joys; men therefore become obsessed with acquiring wealth as part of their overall power. If it is a woman's role in life to be submissive, it is the man's role to be powerful, to control and to get the upper hand. The enjoyment of power is only a pseudo pleasure, one that merely serves to compensate for our general powerlessness in the whirlwind of the psycho-structures around us. The pursuit of power is merely wasted energy, wasted in a search for love or respect—or its pseudo version: awe—something that ought to be afforded every human being from the start. But instead it has to be gained through a complex system of procedures, standards and rewards that keeps

themselves as 'heterosexual', and who may have married and had children, when we have had the opportunity to rethink, refeel, and restructure our lives have fallen in love with women, sometimes much to our own surprise.

The society in which we live channels, guides, and limits our imagination in sexual as well as other matters. Why some of us give ourselves permission to love people of our sex whereas others don't is an interesting question, but I don't think it will be answered by checking our hormone levels or trying to unearth our earliest affectional ties. As more women begin to speak more freely about our sexual experiences, we are learning more about how women come to re-examine, re-evaluate, change. Lately, increasing numbers of women have begun to allow ourselves to acknowledge 'bisexuality'—loving women and men, in succession or simultaneously. I believe that most of us will end up acknowledging that we love certain people or, perhaps, certain kinds of people, and that gender need not be a significant category, though for some of us it may be.

*From Against Separatism, edited by Joe Peacock. Available from B.A.D., P.O. Box 1323, Cambridge, MA. 02238.*

all of society wandering around in a maze, trying desperately at all times to keep on the right path. Most of us can do nothing but fail, or, at the very best, fail ourselves and give in to normalcy.

Our sexuality becomes penile-centric, something at its most repressive as we age and we can't rise to such rigid standards of manhood quite as often. Women are often as good as to appreciate a man who is warm, tender and sensitive, willing to caress them and explore other venues of lovemaking rather than vaginal-penile penetration. Men, however, become obsessed by the various intricacies of their penises, often to the point where lack of an erection—erroneously labelled impotency—or adolescent preoccupation with penis size become causes of major psychological trauma. As part and parcel of an increased sexual liberation on the part of women, the female orgasm has become a regular part of sexual activity; unfortunately many men still erroneously believe this can be achieved through adequate prolongation of an erection and sufficient pumping action, thus

leading to an increased "performance complex" in the psyche of heterosexual men.

Homosexual men are sometimes freer from sexual gender roles, particularly in their relations with women as these relations are already ridden of the possibility of sexual interaction, an interaction often finding itself in a special realm of "relationship politics." Sex finds itself governing our relationships as they become falsely divided between the sexual and the platonic. Homosexual men and women sometimes succeed in breaking sexual tradition, but more often than not find themselves in some other mind hold—be it lesbian separatism, gay beauty pageantry, or "I'm just as normal as you are" family life mimicry. None of this leads to any special liberation.

Feminists demand that men lose their privilege; it is in fact not at all privileges that most men are enjoying in the overall view of things; about as many men fit the ideal as women; the fact that "men" have assumed a position of relative superiority in the game has only served to more completely obscure their oppression. It's no use in hiding behind the flag of one's gender; flags only serve to falsely unite under a common pretext. All people of one gender are similar insofar as all rocks are similar simply on the basis of their being rocks. It is the structure that must be attacked and by all people who have suffered beneath it. It is time to rid the struggle of the concept of "feminism," feminism implying a women's movement, a women's struggle. People of all genitalia unite!

Male liberation and female liberation are exactly the same—it's just the forms of oppression which are different. But in proper perspective the forms of oppression people suffer are very different, regardless of one's gender. It's no longer good enough to "unite" under such simplistic divisions. This is especially true as we see that "your own" will fuck you over just as much as anybody else. This is a fault of nationalism, of racism, and of sexism—male or female. Such divisions based on nationality, race and gender always hinder any moves toward real liberation; they can only establish a new order. One order can never promise to be any better than another.

In thinking about sexism as a "women's issue," I'd like readers to think about it as a men's issue as well. It is indeed a human issue. Until the day when this won't even be an issue.

## Alternative press books

*Continued from page 10*

die class peace activists the *Housmans Peace Diary* will make a nice X-mas gift to remind friends and relatives of their vague commitment to 'Peace'. -L.C.

## Other titles received

*Flowers from the Forest: Meditations* by Swami Nirmalananda (Viswa Shanti Nikethana, B.R. Hills P.O., Chamarajanagar 571 313, Karnataka, India. 1991) 178pp. Rs. 12/- paper.

*Colección de Historia Oral: El Movimiento libertario en España Vol.1.* by José Peirats (Fundación Salvador seguí Ediciones, C/Sagunto, 15, 1º, 28010 Madrid, Spain, undated) 36pp. no price given, pamphlet.

*Colección de Historia Oral: El Movimiento libertario en España Vol.2.* by Juan García Oliver (Fundación

Salvador seguí Ediciones, C/Sagunto, 15, 1º, 28010 Madrid, Spain. 1990) 40pp. no price given, pamphlet.

*Cuadernos de la Guerra Civil Vol.1: Sucesos de Mayo (1937)* (Fundación Salvador seguí Ediciones, C/Sagunto, 15, 1º, 28010 Madrid, Spain. 1989) 56pp. no price given, pamphlet.

*Cuadernos de la Guerra Civil Vol.2: Consejo de Aragon I* (Fundación Salvador seguí Ediciones, C/Sagunto, 15, 1º, 28010 Madrid, Spain. 1989) 124pp. no price given, pamphlet.

*Cuadernos de la Guerra Civil Vols.3/4: Consejo de Aragon II* (Fundación Salvador seguí Ediciones, C/Sagunto, 15, 1º, 28010 Madrid, Spain. 1989) 222pp. no price given, pamphlet.

*Cuadernos de la Guerra Civil Vol.5: Consejo Nacional de Defensa* (Fundación Salvador seguí Ediciones, C/Sagunto, 15, 1º, 28010 Madrid, Spain. 1989) 136pp. no price given, pamphlet.

*Cuadernos de la Guerra Civil Vol.6: Las Relaciones CNT-UGT* (Fundación Salvador seguí Ediciones, C/Sagunto, 15, 1º, 28010 Madrid, Spain. 1989) 136pp. no price given, pamphlet.

*Anares Bibliographie 1991/92* (Anares, Postfach 229, CH-3000 Bern 8, Switzerland, 1991) 75pp. 6.00DM paper.

## The Nihilist's Dictionary

By John Zerzan

### Society

*Se-sī'e-tē n.* from *L. socius, companion*. 1. an organized aggregate of interrelated individuals and groups. 2. totalizing racket, advancing at the expense of the individual, nature and human solidarity.

Society everywhere is now driven by the treadmill of work and consumption. This harnessed movement, so very far from a state of companionship, does not take place without agony and disaffection. Having more never compensates for being less, as witness rampant addiction to drugs, work, exercise, sex, etc. Virtually anything can be and is overused in the desire for satisfaction in a society whose hallmark is denial of satisfaction. But such excess at least gives evidence of the hunger for fulfillment, that is, an immense dissatisfaction with what is before us.

Hucksters purvey every kind of dodge, for example, New Age panaceas, disgusting materialistic mysticism on a mass scale: sickly and self-absorbed, apparently incapable of looking at any part of reality with courage or honesty. For New Age practitioners, psychology is nothing short of an ideology and society is irrelevant.

Meanwhile, Bush, surveying "generations born numbly into despair," is predictably loathsome enough to blame the victimized by citing their "moral emptiness." The depth of immiseration might best be summed up by the federal survey of high schoolers released 9/19/91, which found that 27 percent of them "thought seriously" about suicide in the preceding year.

It could be that the social, with its growing testimony to alienation—mass depression, the refusal of literacy, the rise of panic disorders, etc.—may finally be registering politically. Such phenomena as continually declining voter turnout and deep distrust of government led the Kettering Foundation in June '91 to conclude that "the legitimacy of our political institutions is more at issue than our leaders imagine," and an October study of three states (as reported by columnist Tom Wicker, 10/14/91) to discern "a dangerously broad gulf between the governors and the governed."

The longing for nonmutilated life and a nonmutilated world in which to live it collides with one chilling fact: underlying the progress of modern society is capital's insatiable need for growth and expansion. The collapse of state capitalism in Eastern Europe and the USSR leaves only the 'triumphant' regular variety, in command but now confronted insistently with far more basic contradictions than the ones it allegedly overcame in its pseudo-struggle with 'socialism'. Of course, Soviet industrialism was not qualitatively different from any other variant of capitalism, and far more importantly, no system of produc-

tion (division of labor, domination of nature, and work-and-pay slavery in more or less equal doses) can allow for either human happiness or ecological survival.

We can now see an approaching vista of all the world as a toxic, ozone-less deadness. Where once most people looked to technology as a promise, now we know for certain that it will kill us. Computerization, with its congealed tedium and concealed poisons, expresses the trajectory of society, engineered sleekly away from sensuous existence and finding its current apotheosis in Virtual Reality.

The escapism of VR is not the issue, for which of us could get by without escapes? Likewise, it is not so much a diversion from consciousness as it is itself a consciousness of complete estrangement from the natural world. Virtual Reality testifies to a deep pathology, reminiscent of the Baroque canvases of Rubens that depict armored knights mingling with but separated from naked women. Here the 'alternative' techno-junkies of *Whole Earth Review*, pioneer promoters of VR, show their true colors. A fetish of 'tools', and a total lack of interest in critique of society's direction, lead to glorification of the artificial paradise of VR.

The consumerist void of high tech simulation and manipulation owes its dominance to two increasing tendencies in society, specialization of labor and the isolation of individuals. From this context emerges the most terrifying

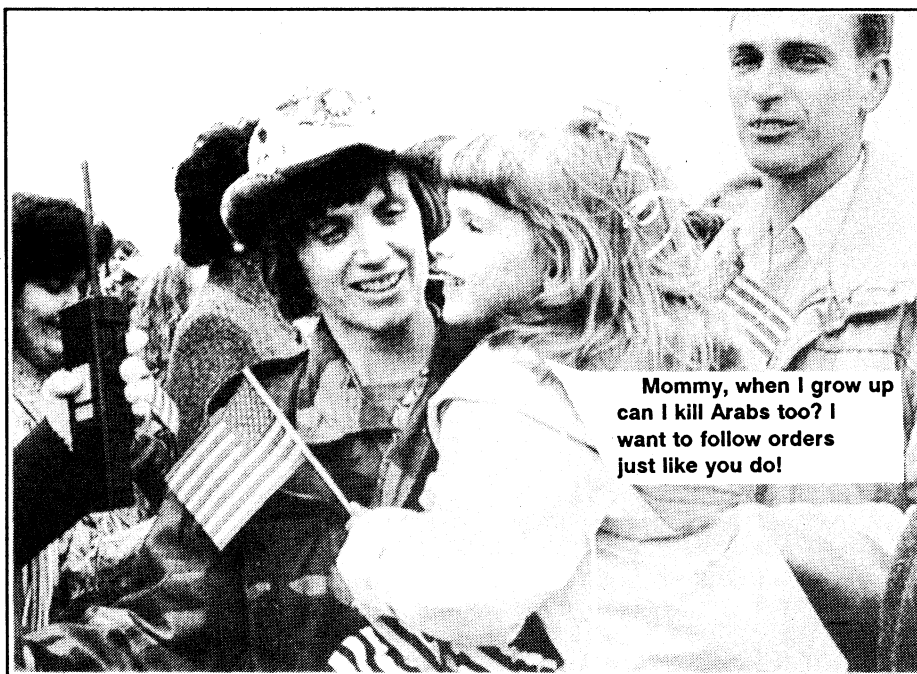
### Guest Column: Loose Cannons

#### The Struggle of Youth in Post-Industrial Society

By Gord H.

To begin any discussion on the project of "youth liberation" in the revolutionary process is to place it in the context of its relation to the social conditions imposed by capital. In this way we can avoid the confusion of adding yet another 'ism' to the long list of oppressions (ie. "ageism, sexism, racism") & are capable, with more clarity, of seeing how these seemingly distinct modes of oppression are part of a singular oppression. Not only this, it also creates the necessary conditions of realizing a perspective rooted in the class struggle, and thus a perspective for revolutionary action.

In the diagrams nicely laid out as 'science' by our Marxist comrades, with some minor exceptions, the dilemma of youth, or wimmin, or ethnic minorities, are relegated to a secondary level of struggle and the prestige of being the "only revolutionary force" is given to the proletariat. If the proletariat, as we understand it in the traditional terms, comprises that class which sells its labor power for a token wage, & especially the industrial worker, we can see how deterministic values, placed on the worker will lead to 'workerist' notions of class struggle. And if we look closer at the proposals of "workers' revolution" put forward by Marxists, and a great



Learning the lesson of the US massacre in the Persian Gulf War.

aspect of evil: it tends to be committed by people who are not particularly evil. Society, which in no way could survive a conscious inspection is arranged to prevent that very inspection.

The dominant, oppressive ideas do not permeate the whole of society, rather their success is assured by the fragmented nature of opposition to them. Meanwhile, what society dreads most are precisely the lies it suspects it is built upon. This dread or avoidance is obviously not the same as beginning to

subject a deadening force of circumstances to the force of events.

Adorno noted in the '60s that society is growing more and more entrapping and disabling. He predicted that eventually talk of causation within society would become meaningless: society itself is the cause. The struggle toward a society—if it could still be called that—of the face-to-face, in and of the natural world, must be based on an understanding of society today as a monolithic, all-encompassing death march.

many anarchists, we can see why the struggle of other social groups becomes almost irrelevant; because, aside from the worker, no other group is capable of "seizing the means of production." I can say, with some exceptions, anarchism rejects this determinism placed on the proletariat, & so the class struggle takes on a different aspect. In the post-industrial society, with radical changes in the productive process including information technology, robotics, the breaking down of productive units into smaller & smaller units spread over a wide area, increases in the service sector, etc. the age-old dreams of "workers seizing the means of production" are finished. The departure of seeing class struggle as only existing in the work-place, or rather the determinism placed on this area, indicates a different perspective of what composes the class struggle. Into this we can say the struggle of youth, wimmin, ethnic minorities, the excluded, as well as the struggle against forced work, forms the basis of struggle in the post-industrial society. This presupposes that the class struggle today is between exploited & exploiter (who organizes society for the aims of capital), and that exploitation exists outside of the struggle against work. The patriarchal & racist ideological basis of capital ensures this. And it is not only because division of the class along racial, sexual or other differences is beneficial to capital, it is because the capitalist structure can do no more than manifest itself in the violence realized along the lines of racial & sexual differences.

#### The Struggle of Youth

To see the struggle of a specific social group within the class, whether it be wimmin, racial groups, etc. presupposes

an understanding that there are specific conditions of exploitation imposed onto that group. The problem with any concepts of "youth liberation" (which will be examined later) is that it is a completely transitory condition. In other words, at some point one will gradually cease to be a 'youth' (and here I do not mean the legal definitions of age).

Do there exist specific conditions of oppression which youth must struggle against? Of course there are! There is the struggle against schools, against sexual repression, age discrimination, and exclusion. But, because 'youth' is a transitory condition, we are all eventually removed from it & thrust into different areas of exploitation.

If it is seen that the exploitation of youth is part of an overall strategy of exploitation carried out by capital, then it cannot be seen as being a question of "youth liberation" outside of the class struggle. Although the conditions are more or less 'transitory', there exists a continuous line of struggle. Schools, besides giving an individual the necessary instruments to interact in society (language, basic math, etc.) their primary purpose is to prepare her/him for entry into the labor force. This is done by providing basic courses in such areas as mechanics, photography, arts, law, physics, science, etc. As well, the hierarchical structures of schools, discipline, etc. provide a necessary service in instilling a "work ethic"; high achievers are awarded, slackness is punished, punctuality is important, competition valued, etc. Outside of the school, in the homes of the nuclear family, the 'responsibility' for raising a child is translated into ownership & possession of a youth. Economically dependent on the family the youth is 'owned' until her/his entry into the work force. In

order to change this reality, if they want to, many youth are forced to "run away" from home, many ending up on the streets of major urban centers where they are forced to enter the 'lumpen-proletariat' class (i.e., prostitution, drugs, expropriation) because they do not qualify for welfare programs. The exclusion of youth in all areas of society is enforced by the judicial system which sets age limits on everything from alcohol, voting, entertainment, sexuality, etc. (in most cases the law is superfluous, giving alcohol to a new born baby is 'illegal', but it is not common simply because it is common sense, & 'under-age' drinking, as well as sexual activity is so common that the laws are constantly changing & even bypassed in the case of schools distributing condoms) to when a youth can 'legally' leave home. The main thrust of these laws is control, based on both a Christian morality (i.e., the sexlessness of youth & ideas of innocence) & capital's interest in a stable work force & environment.

In the post-industrial society, with unemployment accepted as a condition of non-employment, youth are in a constant state of flux. Upon leaving the schooling systems, options for youth are limited to unemployment, highly exploitative work, or again entering the schooling systems via university. These 'options' are constantly open to conditions imposed according to capital's class analysis, with levels of education, wages, housing, living standards, etc. dictated by an individual's class background. Today, the post-secondary education systems are increasingly being shut out to the poor with increased tuitions, heavier workloads; the result being an exclusion of the poor. Thus in the "youth liberation" project there is a clear division based on class.

Young proletarians are constantly drifting in & out of employment. The modern welfare state, while at times supplying basic living needs, also uses this surplus of potential workers. Work training schemes fill a double role, that of not only providing training to youth & keeping them content with the possibility of future employment, but also using the training as cheap labor. The existence of a partially trained unemployed workforce is also used as blackmail against those who are employed. But this "state of flux" also creates two contradictory tendencies; the youth may begin to want employment in order to raise her/his standard of living, but on the other hand there is an intense dislike of work. This can most clearly be seen in the high attrition rate in jobs most available to youth, particularly the service sector (ie. the food services such as McDonalds!). Work becomes an activity to be avoided, though at times necessary in order to survive. Patterns of working until it is no longer necessary are well developed. However, even though there exists the opportunity to engage in short term employment, unemployment remains the reality for most proletarian youth, especially for ethnic minorities. This excluded strata of youth are thrust into varying degrees of ghettoization, no longer limited to the ghettos of the past such as Harlem or Brixton. This 'ghetto' can now be defined in terms of exclusion, from both the productive process & participation. Where the '77 punks may have sung about "No Future" because it was a new reality, today it is just common knowl-

edge. The result is irrational outbreaks of violence almost always manifesting themselves in attacks on police & property. And, as Jean Weir states, "The cry is a violent one that asks for nothing...the explosions do not have rational demands to make" (intro. to *From Riot to Insurrection*). This violence is almost always present at social activities such as sporting events, concerts, parties, festivals, in all areas of society from large urban centers to suburban 'paradises'. There is also the increase in gang activity & other 'anti-social' violence that doesn't limit itself to attacks of police but also extends to brother, sister & friends. It can develop into an insurrectional action but it can also be firmly in the capitalist logic, reactionary & regressive.

The instinctive rebelliousness of such uprisings, directed almost always at easily identifiable figures of authority (cops, schools, politicians, etc.) is already well documented in revolts such as Brixton, Broadwater Farm, Belfast, and in the mini-riots occurring all over the US as well. The Left political parties, organizations, etc. generally fall over themselves in attempts to denounce this violence or to present it as a problem of a "lack of opportunities" for young people. As I have already said, any discussion on "youth liberation" cannot take place outside of the context of the class struggle. This is the revolutionary option, to go beyond the reformist illusions of single issue politics as seen in liberal feminism, for example, where the demands are for "equal pay, equal opportunities, & equal participation."

#### Youth in the Anarchist Movement

'Politicized' youth, mostly having their backgrounds in the punk scene, see in the anarchist movement ideas which reflect their own. The instinctive distrust and even hatred of authority figures such as cops, teachers, politicians, etc. finds affinity with the anti-authoritarian beliefs of anarchism. Anarchism appears to allow a higher level of participation, expression & accessibility than other revolutionary tendencies (ie. the marxist, stalinists, reformist organizations, etc.). In reality there is a wall of incomprehension, a dialogue that has little to do with them, & an emphasis on discussion. The result is a rejection of theory as being meaningless, a division along ages. We need to look closer at these.

Because of the levels of unemployment, & no responsibilities such as a family, etc. many young people have a higher degree of mobility & flexibility. In this situation it is no surprise to find that action takes precedent. Some examples are the amount of young anarchist/autonomist comrades engaged in squatting, ALF actions, acts of sabotage, etc. These are not 'youthful' activities in which only the 'young' can participate. Rather, it is a division imposed by capital, even in the revolutionary movement, in which younger comrades take action & older comrades engage in theory & produce the main publications. It is a division which the revolutionary movement must break: theory develops the direction for action. There can be no division. The tendency among younger comrades to reject theory sees its reflection in the tendency of older comrades to reject action. This split is

constant though not always definite. One example of this can be seen in the production of propaganda, papers & magazines. The theoretical discussion in publications such as *Fifth Estate*, *Anarchy*, *Kick It Over* is without doubt diffuse & of little interest to younger comrades. This is precisely because the discussion, with few exceptions, is not meant to be put into action, but is instead intended for even more discussion. This is not only a reflection, but also a contributing factor, to the fact that younger comrades rarely read, contribute to, or participate in any of the main anarchist papers in N. America. Without meaning to be overly critical, what exists is one level of interaction based on an "old boys" network where worthy gentlemen such as members of *Fifth Estate*, *Anarchy*, *Demolition Derby*, *Ideas & Action*, as well as Bob Black, John Zerzan, etc. write articles back and forth endlessly in their respective papers, and another level consisting of a proliferation of zines, self-managed groups, etc. rooted in the punk ghetto such as *Profane Existence*, NYDAC, *Nabate*, AYF, *Hippycore*,

*Endless Struggle*, etc. In this way, actions & theory remain poorly applied. The Days of Action at past anarchist gatherings are a good example of this.

#### The Revolutionary Process

It's been said before; we can only take the right steps if we are going in the right direction. The struggle of youth on the social level, & the exclusion youth face in the revolutionary movement, are obstacles to be overcome. Pursuing the very idea of "youth liberation" is certainly not one which will be of any use. The question is; how will youth *participate in and contribute to* the revolutionary process. By clarifying this question we can begin to break down divisions between younger & older comrades, action & theory, & extend in a practical way the struggles at base level from irrational riots to conscious insurrections, always keeping in mind the social conditions imposed by capital on the exploited class as a whole.

Correspondence c/o *Endless Struggle*, POB 69601 Stn. K, Vancouver B.C. V5K 4W7 Canada.

## Fonkey Munky

By E.B. Funck

### The Anarchist Youth & Their Role in Anarchist Projects

There seems to be some dialogue in anarchist publications about youth and anarchy, and young people's role in anarchist projects.

First of all, I think there is a misconception that "anarchist youth" are gutter punks working on obscure xeroxed zines, participating in suicidal street actions, and squatting trashed-out shit-holes. Although there may be a few anarcho-punk types that live like that, I don't know any (though I must admit I know few young anarchists in the first place). I suppose the ones responsible for casting this image may just be romanticizing the imagined mobility and autonomy they see in these lifestyles, qualities they feel they have lost. Maybe there's something wrong with me, but I don't find poverty that romantic.

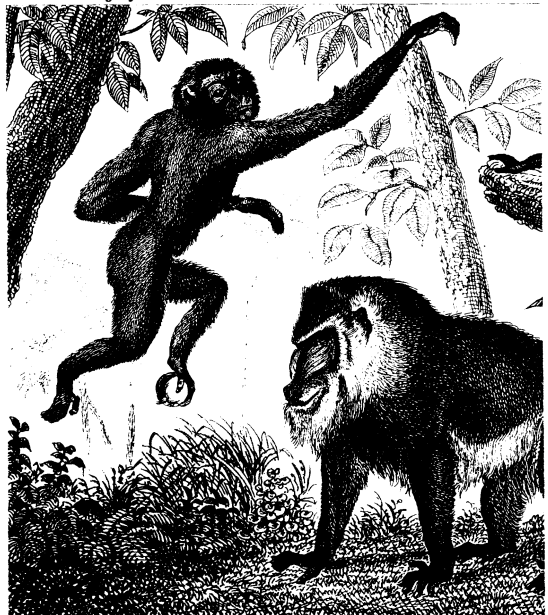
Another reason urban punks are the stereotype of young anarchists, is because of their effort in creating various organizations, intentionally using the 'youth' role. They are more visible compared to the non-punks who are comfortable hanging out and working with the older generation.

In a sense, many youth are responsible for ghettoizing themselves by creating groups where they separate themselves from 'adult' anarchists. I perceive a tendency for many youth to simply write off input from older people, both critical and supportive; many young people feel that what older people have to say is totally alien and irrelevant to the situations of younger people, which from my experiences is definitely not the case. I feel the same contempt for such youth organizations as I do for gender or race separatist groups—it

doesn't make sense to separate if your goal is liberating your body and mind.

In dealing with my age and the unfair limitations I sometimes face, I try not to hold unreasonable attitudes toward, or demands of, older people. I'm also glad I haven't accepted the 'youth' role for myself. Although I'm interested in meeting other anarchists my age to see what they're doing, I don't really care that much when it comes to socializing. With friends, age is not really anything to think or worry about—unless they're nervous about that "age of consent" thing. My advice to other young anarchist types is to contact people that are doing something interesting and try to join them—they probably won't care how old you are, and you can learn a lot. It's also nice to be with people interested in having sincere relationships, as opposed to the boring, pretentious 'alternative' crowd some of us are forced to resort to at school.

Younger people lack only the life experience and working knowledge of some older people, not the social skills and creative ability. There is no reason we should have to waste our time in schools with people we can't relate to, just because of our age; young people need to do whatever it takes to find a place where they feel comfortable and can use their skills in something they find enjoyable.





## LETTERS

## Have something to say? Write us!

We would like to encourage you to write us in order to continue this dialogue, whether you are sympathetic or critical of anarchist theories and practices. All letters to *Anarchy* will be printed with the author's initials only, unless it is specifically stated that her/his full name may be used or that s/he wishes to remain anonymous, or the name already appears in the paper—as in the case of an author of an article or the creator of artwork published in *Anarchy*.

We will edit letters that are redundant, overly long, unreadable or excessively boring. (Ellipses in italicized brackets indicate editorial omissions.) Please limit length to four double-spaced, typewritten pages. Address your letters to C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446. We look forward to hearing from you!

## A very little opportunity

Dear editor,

Greetings. I received the *Anarchy* magazine ('91 Spring) a short time ago that you sent me. Thanks for it. I read by enjoying it the full and learning fully useful something for me. I willingly was interested in the legend of the Great Dismal Maroons, because it has aroused my interest in the U.S.'s history kept secret from people throughout the world. But, generally, I'm interested in nearly all subjects of the world and human beings who want to live freely today and tomorrow (in particular, philosophy, psychology, policies and so on).

It's possible to say the same thing is also for some (else) who has well educated (before)—I mean, to be in prison.

During all this time, I have tried so hard to use even a very little opportunity for studying or reading on every subject. But as you imagine, there were a lot of obstacles in finding books or anything else written and passing over them was very hard mostly owing to looking for them high and low.

Even though in these days conditions in prison are not bad like past times for us, I personally haven't useful things to educate myself, unfortunately. Therefore, I would like you to send to me this kind of book, please.

In addition, I'm going to local court in Istanbul 12 years late, owing to the quashing of my punishment (life-sentence). For this reason, I would like to inform you of my new address. I thank you over and over again.

With best wishes,  
Atilla Akgönül  
Veled Gelebi sok. No: 34/7  
Sahin apt. Finikzade  
Istanbul  
Turkey

## Uniquenesses?

Maybe the principal problem with anarchy is that it does not know where it is. In Lewis Mumford's *The Story of Utopias* published in 1922, he wrote (p.208) "And at last, there remains no other community than a multitude of anarchic individuals...." Thus everyone is an anarchist.

In addition, on p.275 he writes "Today the whole corpus of knowledge is in an anarchic state...." And all knowledge is anarchistic.

Bonaro Overstreet, on p.231 of *Understanding Fear* writes (about the authoritarian personality): "This type of personality is destructively anarchic...." Plus our leaders are destructive anarchists.

Maybe anarchists should change

their name to Uniquenesses a la Max Stirner, or insurgents, because he did not believe in new arrangements. On p. 316 he says, "The revolution aimed at new arrangements; insurrection leads us no longer to let ourselves be arranged, but to arrange ourselves and sets no glittering hopes on 'institutions.' It is not a fight against the established, since, if it prospers, the established collapses of itself, it is only a working forth out of the established." I worked forth out of typewriting.

But Max Stirner is not anarcho-anything. He is a uniqueness or an insurgent.

I just found out why Scott Nearing would not debate Emma Goldman. Emma used to run off with the take and leave the local people empty. In education, Paul Goodman made establishment recommendations. And I'll bet Friedman and Bookchin do, too. I heard Bookchin at U. Mass. He's a sell-out. I know Stirner is sound. He is for the individual.

Karl Mannheim in a letter to Herbert Read wrote: "The natural forces in self-adjustment in small groups produce more wisdom than any abstract thinking and so the scope for them within the plan is even more important than we can guess."

Baa, baa, baa.

Anarchists all are we; including leaders/knowledge fraternity. But work slaves to blame for the rich as well. Baa, baa, baa.

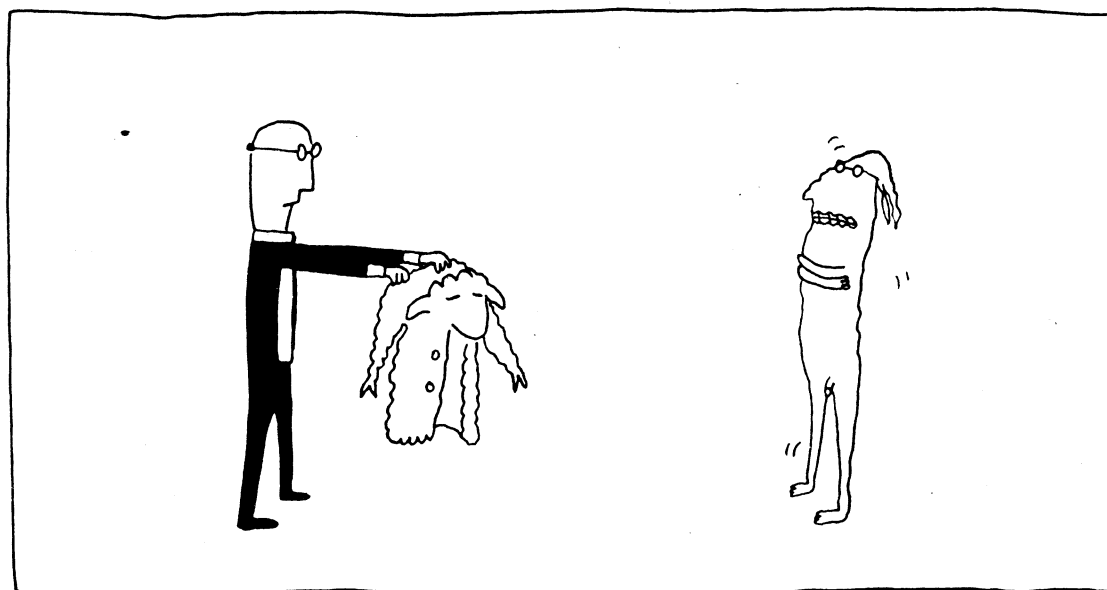
Lev, in under 1,000 words can you explain why you repudiate Max Stirner by using the word 'libertarian'?

D.S., Bonsall, CA.

Ps. I nominate Carl R. Rogers PhD. as anarchist of the century!

[Say what? -Lev]

G o v e r n m e n t



©Mr.Fish (4510 Ritchie Street, Philadelphia, PA. 19127).

Mr. fish

## Typical rightist ploy

Dear X,

I made certain statements about *Smut* & I stand by them. One of my points was that Amerikan "counter culture" tended to absorb Amerikan mainstream academic philosophy either directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, & to see social problems in terms defined by the mainstream—terms in which no real solution can be reached. I gave William Morris as just one example of a truly great alternative philosopher of the past who has been buried by the establishment. I do not believe in quoting chapter & verse to prove that I have understood what I have read or that my criticism is relevant. Suzuki said you can't spoonfeed people—breaking out of social straightjackets requires an effort of will, & I'm not going to spell out all the connecting links for you—you'll have to make a small effort to think for yourself I'm afraid. *Smut* certainly does embody an example of the influence of Marcusean Freudianism on the counter culture, whether you are aware of where these ideas came from or not.

Freud defined "polymorphous perverse" as a generalized sexuality including oral, anal, phallic, & genital. He saw eating & shitting as sexual acts & thus considered infants sexual beings & breastfeeding as a kind of incestuous act. I myself find this quite a sick idea. (I'm not denying that sexuality is a part of the mentality of infants, only that the non-genital sensual pleasures of children are all necessarily sexual.) Freud believed that eating & shitting, heterosex, homosexuality, & autosex were all natural, but socially undesirable. He was a Victorian classical academic & felt that people must be 'sensible', & learn to "fit in." Marcuse as a 20th century Freudian academic said that if polymorphous perversity is natural, then it is desirable. I just reject the Freudian idea of what is natural from the start. I agree, as a romantic, that nature is good & desirable, I just don't see nature the way Freud, or Marcuse, or *Smut* do. Pedophilia implies sex with children—please don't distort the meaning with academic 'literalism' based upon the Latin roots of the term. This is a typical rightist ploy for twisting philosophical argument into idiocy. Words

should be used to convey ideas, not to split hairs & verbally jerk off.

Feel free to print my insubstantial & empty posturing. Maybe if I keep it up long enough I can make it as a hipster too?

Sincerely,  
Elliot Cantsin, N. Merrick, NY.

[Excuse me if I wonder where you made your statements about *Smut* since I can't remember or locate them in any back issues of this journal? Perhaps you really meant to send your letter to the publishers of *Smut* but used the wrong address? -Lev]

## Sexual abuse &amp; sexual repression

Sexual abuse and sexual repression are expressions of the same pathology. This is especially the case in incestual families. Parents who use kids for erotic purposes are the first to prohibit self-regulated autoeroticism and to ridicule their victims' efforts to form romantic attachments with friends of their own choice.

For most of us, living in our current screwed up society, sex is a persistently ambiguous affair. On the one hand we are desperate for it and rarely get satisfaction. On the other hand (if we are honest with ourselves) we find something distasteful and repulsive about it. For child sex abuse survivors (and that includes most of us when 'abuse' is considered in its full scope) erotic activity arouses memories of childhood trauma. The effects of trauma can be annihilating—people have killed themselves under the pressure. Many people accept celibacy, not out of choice but to check the restimulation of primal emotions. Others "split off" their sexuality, enduring emotional suffocation in couples or families, or promiscuous acting out. Either way, the capacity to enjoy heartfelt orgasmic potency is suppressed.

In recognizing the reality of kids' sexuality, grown-ups must understand that kids' eroticism is at least as ambivalent as their own. Sexual acting out can reflect traumas inflicted during the first weeks of a person's life and even during birth. The danger of the 'libertarian' perspective is that sometimes it projects adult desire for unambiguously straightforward sex upon kids who are seen, inaccurately, as relatively innocent and

free. This attitude fails to consider that for kids, because of their social oppression, issues of sexual ambivalence are even more fundamental than for adults.

Because our sexuality is so ambivalently split off, it is impossible to simplistically equate 'consent' with mere verbalized 'assent'. We have all been seduced, at times, into disastrous relationships which we 'assented' to (giving voice to a split off predator within our psyche) that, existentially, we did not consent to. If, as adults negotiating with other adults, it is possible for our real intentions to be undermined, imagine how difficult it is for kids to undertake such transactions with grown-ups (or even with other kids when adults are supervising the action).

Out of touch with their own ambiguities, adults manipulate kids' erotic ambivalence to suit their own purposes. The prevalence of child sex abuse demonstrates the uselessness of child protection legislation. Young people are consistently denied access to information revealing the nature of their own oppression. Without knowledge of the hierarchy of adults over kids, it is impossible for young people to resist those internalized predators that are apt to collude with adult demands. Unless it fully recognizes ageist power structures, the 'libertarian' position on child sexuality is a dangerous form of pseudo-radical posturing. Dogmatic efforts to protect kids from sexual repression create more sexual abuse. Dogmatic efforts to protect kids from sexual abuse create more sexual repression. You can't dish out knowledge of profound social contradictions as easily as condoms and birth control pills. The wisdom required to successfully confront erotic ambivalence cannot be taught as an objectivised commodity. Neither can it be 'granted' by petty tinkering of the age-of-consent laws. It can only be realised through resisting the overarching global domination of adult over child.

M.C.  
BCM Box 7958  
London WC1N 3XX  
England

[Certainly not everyone will agree with you that they feel there is necessarily something 'distasteful and repulsive' about sex! Consider that you may be reading some of your own sexual ambivalences into the lives of kids in some of your less justified and global pronouncements. -Lev]

## I would like to have a friend or two

Dear friend,

While reading *Factsheet Five* #42 I came upon your name & address. I would like to read your publication and receive all of your literature. I am caged in the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility (S.O.C.F.); due to my extremely limited state pay of \$6 a month I am not quite able to repay you at this time. Is there any way that you can place my name upon your mailing list for future mailings? I have just been released from solitary confinement where I was locked six (6) months without direct sunlight, fresh air, and I have not viewed a TV or heard a radio for half a year. I was permit-

## LETTERS

ted no books, magazines, or newspapers, therefore I have no knowledge of the world around me during that time. I lived from day to day from hand to mouth on the worst of prison food and living conditions; never so much as seeing an apple, orange, or any fresh fruit. I went from 180 lbs to 140 lbs within the first 30 days and the day I was released from isolation I had to tie my prison pants up with a shoestring else they'd fall down my skin & bone waist. Prior to being locked in a solitary confinement isolation cage I was attending college in prison and I had my own TV & radio as well as a few personal items of clothing. The move to isolation caused me to lose everything and so now I am without even those few little things. A TV or radio does not turn a prison cage into a hotel but at least it did help, to take my mind off of the misery of imprisonment. Now there is nowhere that I can turn to for help! My mother & father are no longer alive. I am without relations so I have to make it the best way I know how. I have been sentenced to a period of imprisonment for an alleged offense of which I did not commit so this makes doing time very tuff for me. But I am strong and I will survive, hoping someday to prove my innocence. I would like to have a friend or two to talk to since I have no one with which to correspond with. There is a need to share personal feelings and life. So after seeing your ad in *FFI* I thought I'd drop you a line to let you know I am still alive. Thank you for allowing me to share this with you.

Sincerely,  
R. Creager SOCF # 209007  
POB 45699  
Lucasville, OH. 45699-0001

## Visible walls

Dear *Anarchy*,

I'm writing to you from an American Gulag in Butner, North Carolina. Three days past, I received *Anarchy* #28 as a sample issue through the *Utne Reader* service. Already, it is coming apart at the seams (staples). Pages are dog-eared, passages highlighted and contacts noted. Yes, I've found a source for information, communication and affirmation of my non-beliefs.

My attitudes, thoughts, feelings, opinions—whatever—have always existed. Yet, I cannot label them. My lack of communication with like-minded individuals is one reason. Another reason is I reject labels; to label your-self is to limit your-self.

I see your magazine as a means to refine my thinking. By reading it, and others like it, I become more informed. In this environment (prison), information is lacking.

Subscriptions, you say, are free to prisoners. I think I qualify. I would also appreciate a few back issues which I've listed on the enclosed subscription form. Still, I'd like to offer whatever support I can. I will arrange to have a friend on the outside send you a few dollars....

I plan to write other publications and individuals listed in your magazine and I would welcome any letters from anyone interested. I'm originally from Texas (I'm 27

years old) and the how & why of the circumstances which led me here are still, after 18 months, hard to believe.

In 21 months, I will be released to freedom. I find that amusing; the only difference between life inside prison and life outside prison is, here, the walls are visible and the 'boss' is in your face everyday. Outside, the walls are seen only by a few and the boss is much more (but, not very) subtle in his ways.

To those few, on the outside, who see the walls: Tear Them Down!

Yours in freedom,  
Glenn Vallantyne  
12934-078 Clemson Unit  
POB 1000  
Butner, NC. 27509-1000

## Turkish punk band

Dear Sir,

We are all girl *punk* band from Turkey that is called 'Spinners'. We are three girls in this band. Spinners has been playing for three years and having lots of concerts in Turkey. Meanwhile we managed to have our first demo "Dig the hole, forget the sun" available priced U.S.\$7 (postpaid-cash only) plus lyrics from:

Suhail Kececioğlu  
PO Box 154  
06692 Kavaklıdere  
Ankara, Turkey

## Co-ops &amp; accountability

Dear Lev,

Thanks for sharing your views on alternative magazine cooperatives in the recent letter of yours published in *Small Press Review*. I'm also a subscriber to *Anarchy* and have long been interested in anarchist thinking on cooperatives. I'm glad and encouraged to hear you've had some positive experiences working with co-ops. I'm still very much committed to cooperative models, but unfortunately many of my own experiences have been negative. I don't look at these experiences, however, as negating the basic validity of cooperatives, but simply as revealing some of the obstacles that must be overcome if co-ops are to really work.

One of the main obstacles, as you point out in your letter, is the fact that the present "academic/-business/political/military world" doesn't nurture the kind of values which are necessary for co-ops to succeed. Co-ops do require, as you also suggest, the ability to "take responsibility for commitments, communicate well, respect peers and avoid power plays." What makes this especially problematic is that we're in a Catch-22 situation: co-ops can't succeed unless these abilities are developed, but co-ops are also the only places where people can begin to acquire these skills. Moreover, it takes time for people to acquire a cooperative orientation. If we spend a lot of time in co-ops on education and consciousness-raising, the basic work the co-op has been set up to do gets neglected. But if we concentrate on the basic work, the lack of education and consciousness-raising turns the whole project into something which is no longer a co-op. This dilemma is not an argument against co-ops, but it is a problem I think we need to find ways of overcoming.

A little over two years ago I started a literary magazine here in Tokyo called *Edge*, which was intended to be an English-language forum in Japan for contemporary poetry, fiction, etc. I started out by myself, but I told other people who became interested in working on it that we'd try to organize the magazine as a cooperative with equally shared decision-making and equally shared responsibilities. The people helping were fairly knowledgeable about literature, but had no experience with the production/administrative/distribution/circulation side of making a magazine work. Because I didn't want to end up doing all these tasks myself and also to give the others more real responsibility (and therefore more control) over the magazine, we adopted a policy of job rotation. Everyone agreed to learn all the various jobs connected with the magazine as a condition for keeping their editorial post (e.g., as poetry editor, fiction editor, etc.). I wrote up a manual outlining exactly what needed to be done in

each area—not because I was trying to "dictate" to the others what to do, but simply because I was the only one who'd had any previous experience making a magazine.

On paper the entire project should have worked, because we had clearly defined areas of responsibility, a system of rotation, and basic agreement beforehand on these points. In practice, though, people ended up putting a lot of energy into their editorial work and insufficient energy into the less glamorous administrative work. After two years of trying, I found that most of the real responsibility for making the magazine work still fell on my own shoulders—not a single person had learned all the various duties connected with the magazine even though they had originally agreed to do this as part of their terms for becoming an editor. Moreover, there was an underlying feeling that any attempt to shift real responsibility over to the other editors would be looked at as "dictatorial"—if pressed too hard, people

would threaten to quit altogether. On the other hand, cutting back on the editors' editorial decision-making power to make it commensurate with the work they were actually doing would also be looked at as "anti-democratic"—a perception which would also cause people to quit. Either way, any attempt to 'enforce' accountability would be looked at as authoritarian.

I repeatedly encountered this attitude among the various people I worked with and can't quite understand or explain it. I'd also experienced it previously while working on other magazines. Whenever I talked about responsibilities I was accused of being 'schoolmarmish'. Whenever I talked about accountability I was described as being "like the pigs in *Animal Farm*." People want 'freedom'—but it seems they don't want to take on real responsibility and don't want to be held accountable. The act of holding someone accountable does in fact establish a hierarchical relationship between two people, but the lack of accountability also establishes a hierarchical relationship since one person ends up indulging their creativity while the other ends up doing all the work. When this happens in a cooperative you end up with the dedicated few doing the lion's share of the work, while everyone else continues to insist on equal decision-making. This is probably even more exploitative than the opposite situation in which one person makes all the decisions while everyone else does the work. Certainly it contributes to burn out and the closing down of cooperatives, as eventually happened with *Edge*. If the bosses don't burn out, though, the fact that they're doing all the work sometimes becomes an excuse for them to legitimize exerting more authoritarian control over the organization.

The way to overcome exploitation is not only to spread the decision-making around, but also to spread the responsibilities around. Many people, though, seem to look at freedom as "freedom to do whatever one wants whenever one wants to do it." A magazine or any other cooperative endeavor simply can't work on this principle, though, because there are certain things that need to be done whether someone wants to do them or not. A magazine simply can't exist if there aren't people who can consistently take responsibility for seeing that it's typeset, printed, mailed to subscribers, etc.—tasks which are not as glamorous or rewarding as selecting and editing manuscripts. Cooperatives cannot succeed unless we are able to come up with some non-hierarchical, non-coercive method of holding people accountable for responsibilities they've freely agreed to undertake.

Have you read Merritt Clifton's *Small Press as Class Struggle*, by the way? The pamphlet certainly contributes to an anarchist perspective on alternative publishing. His views seem more 'individualistic' than 'collectivist', however—i.e., more towards self-publishing than towards forming publishing cooperatives.

All best,  
R.E., Tokyo, Japan

## Dear Occupant

Dear Occupant,

This form letter is to introduce you to a new form of communication. It is a sleeping giant of an underground subversive network. Oh, another dream of techno-utopia, you say. What is it cellular phones for the masses? A TV on every subway car? No, it's not a machine. And it doesn't cost you any money.

It's those goddamned envelopes. Those Business Reply Envelopes. The ones that say "No Postage Necessary." They're everywhere. In junk mail, on the street, even on buses and trains. So what, you say? Well consider these items:

- \* An envelope stuffed with something interesting provides some mail worker out there with a ten minute break from work. "Hey, listen to this...."
- \* It is a direct form of communication. Your letter or artwork or whatever is a personal letter in a work place filled with mind numbing forms.
- \* It can't be censored. You are the only censor. Since your letter arrives in the same envelope that all the other mail arrives in, it can't be weeded out. The boss's ability to control what can be in the work environment is eroded.
- \* The company pays for it. Every letter they receive in these envelopes costs them 39¢ postage due.
- \* No one owns this form of communication. There is no leader. There are no guidelines.
- \* The entire network can never be fully known. The mail arrives to a certain degree randomly. It can't be anthologized. It's not for sale. You can't buy it.
- \* The only way they can stop us is if they stop sending out all these envelopes. And that'd be great.
- \* This form of communication has a built in ending. When the government and corporations crumble, so will the mail rooms and these envelopes. We don't have to worry about this dragging on past its prime.
- \* It doesn't even have a name. You can name it but it will be different in different cities.
- \* No meetings.

You know, I used to work in a mail room. In those horrible wretched days, I always wished that an envelope I opened would have something different inside. Something interesting. Well, it never happened for me. But now you and I can make that dream come true for the thousands of poor schlep across the country who have to work in the mail room of some corporation.

Please spread the word. Encourage your friends to take advantage of this opportunity.

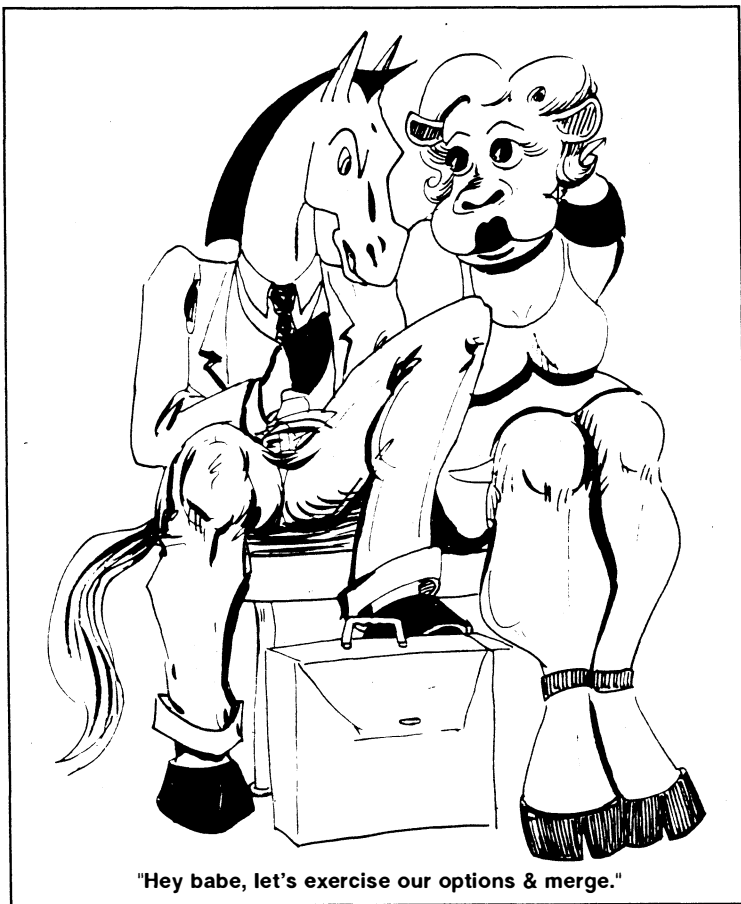
In leisure,  
U.A.S.

## Where is this fucking mutual aid?

Hello *Anarchy*,

It's that time to renew my sub. I received the latest one #29 and the code on the mailing label has [P29] typed on it. We'll I'm still in prison, so sign me up for another tour. I'm in solidarity with all the oppressed peoples of the world or I like to think so. But lately I haven't been sensing any charity from certain people out there in so-called anarchist circles. I was reading the letter titled "Anarcho-vice squads," I didn't get to finish reading it because the censor pigs here found something offensive on pg.35. That's one of the things, I'm speaking (or actually writing) about. You see *Anarchy*, *Factsheet*, and *Fifth Estate* have all been censored in part down here in Texas.

I have a screed built up in my head, but it seems like so much aerial persiflage, as a friend of mine is fond of saying. For starters at the moment I have only one anarchist writing me and that's because he started from a prison related zine. The only person I have visiting me, aside from my folks, is a Xtian womyn from nearby. Hey listen up Anarchist from Amarillo, you have at least two comrades in the local prison, that is near the nuke plant. One is Victor Mendoza #421216 and another one is Mike Kelly #493005, both at 9601 NE 24th St., Amarillo, TX. 79107-9601, and we would like some letters and some visits. We may not be as important as protesting Pantex or "The Gulf War," but we're still Terran prisoners that are anarchists and in this immediate area. We need some fucking compassion. I'm not trying to make anyone feel guilty. I along with my comrade feel shitty that we are the only two in this whole area who can relate. Where is all this fucking mutual aid and voluntary co-operation, I took anarchy to be about? The rest of you are going to learn alot from us when Pig George decides to install himself King-for-life under some martial law plan like Rex '84. *I live under martial law now!* This may not be the U.S. Army, but it's a para-military organization, that's peppered with reservist, National Guards and ex-soldiers that are not critical of U.S. policy now or then. Add to that kids and spouses of ex-soldiers and you have an occupied territory, made up of Third World people. Hey Amerikkka this is your Azania, this is your Palestine, etc. International solidarity is extremely important, but so is taking care of the home front. What happened to the prison abolitionist of the '60s and '70s? I'm in the middle of the Bible Belt and are there any comrades supporting my atheism, *Hell No!* I'm having to pick up stuff from Jewish atheists. I could get more help from capitalist, homophobic, racist, patriarchal, nationalistic, fascistic pigs than I can from my supposed comrades. So you say you don't know me. Well if you live in the Amarillo area why don't you drop me a line, get to know me, and then you can visit me. If you live in the Odessa/Midland area, hey good news, that's where I'll be living when I get out sometime within the next year. Let's start a



By Wendy S. Duke (POB 80044, Akron, OH. 44308).

dialogue. By the way fruitarians from Australia what happened to my answer about the ozone question, am I not good enough to answer? By the way anarchist, how many prisoners do you write or visit?

In the beginning I wrote that this was a screed. I'm rambling but there is quite a bit I want to say. I'm neither for the left or the right, but I keep hearing Marxist drivel constantly. How much of Marx can be salvaged from the scrap heap he left behind? How great was Thomas Paine? Did *Common Sense*, really make sense? Is protesting better than guns? Without seeming to defend Kurt Saxon or his unenlightened views, does Toni Otter have a better idea of surviving anything period? Well let's hear about it. All you impractical anarchist that have the idea that factories are going to keep on rolling after the revolution, better get use to the idea of uprooting the entire system. What good would it be if we had a revolution and people tried to leave Lev Chernyi, Murray Bookchin, and Noam Chomsky in charge? I'm not helping bring in *Animal Farm*. No animal is more equal than another in that context. Instead of bitching, like I can only do from in here, do something. Plant trees, grow a garden, learn self-sufficiency, [stop] the Trilateral Commission. *Do something!* I've been beat, gone on hunger strikes, been in work strikes and more or less stuck by my comrade in here. Let us have a little bit of the same from our comrades out there.

In solidarity,  
Victor Mendoza, Amarillo, TX.

## Noisy Concept

*Anarchy*,

Wendy S. Duke gave me a copy of your zine when my band played at the Millworks in Akron, Ohio. I've been involved in the way underground anarchist movement of the punk scene for a while, but I never knew a big academic anarchist zine like yours would be al-

lowed to exist. But it's a free country, right? Ha. They even let it slip into the prison system? Go figgur.

Enclosed is my fanzine, *Noisy Concept*, for possible review. It is a reader's forum of discussion and I've found that many anarchist people are usually the best to take is seriously. That's because, to be an anarchist, you have to understand things, such as how ridiculous the concept of large scale government really is. The zine price is \$.50 + \$.29 stamp or \$6/10 issues. Another thing I wanted to ask about was a letter I read in *Anarchy* #28, "Prisoner Viciously Attacked" in Waupun Corr. Inst. You printed the letter w/o a reply and didn't say if you tried to help him or not. Have you heard from him since then? That was a really sad story—that guy needs help. Did you call those numbers he listed? It's probably rare when one of his letters slips out of that hole—you gotta do something. Try maybe getting Wisconsin cops on their case. Cops put him in there, it's their responsibility to be humane.

Well, thanks for spreading the word.

*Noisy Concept*  
c/o Mike T.  
621 Bassett Rd.  
Bay Village, OH 44140

[Glad you like *Anarchy* and thanks for your fanzine! Concerning the letter in *Anarchy* #28 by the prisoner Ervie Gray, the question is not did we respond, but did you? Our response was to actively focus many hours and dollars to make Gray's circumstances known to hundreds of readers via *Anarchy*.

Cops and prison guards, in general, are paid to do exactly what Gray says they are doing. Expecting them to be "humane" is a groundless hope.

Have we heard from Gray since #28? Yes, in *Anarchy* #29 (p. 35) there is an update on Gray, including his new prison address and other new contact addresses. I'm sure Ervie would be happy to hear from you. If you want to know more about his situation and/or support his fight, the option is yours. -Toni Otter]

## What a day!

Mr. Chernyi,

Enclosed is a renewal of my subscription. I very much look forward to receiving each issue though I very much dislike the pompous word-order quite often. Also quite often I am pleased & expanded by what I find.

Perhaps a time will come when all people look inside themselves and all this verbiage, your publication and my poetry included, will be obsolete. When that time comes; a time of freedom, wisdom, equanimity, trust...well (good or no)...what a day!

Thank you very much,  
M.K., Newport, RI.

## Crime and punishment

Greetings,

I have just received an issue of *Anarchy* by ordering cassettes from Subterranean Records. I am quite impressed by the articles, ideals and issues covered in your magazine.

I am being held hostage by the state of Wisconsin for delivery of marijuana and a felon in possession of a firearm (semi-auto Tec-9).

I would like to request a subscription to *Anarchy* and would like to ask for issue #28 in which the exposé by Ervie Gray is contained. His views and the story of his treatment are of interest and also effects myself and other inmates here. The Wisconsin prison is one of the most bigoted fascist systems I have been in.

Wisconsin prisons are so overcrowded that I was sent almost directly to a minimum security prison for a violent crime. The state also pressures the parole commission to release a certain amount of prisoners to make room. So, they let out people that have not completed their drug, alcohol and anger programs in the hopes that these people will not be able to abide by their parole regulations and will return....

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
L.V., Gordon, WI.

## Won't get fooled again?

Lev,

Re: Winter 1990-91 issue letters page 34, "Projecting dissatisfaction?" Your reply, "Consuming the spectacle."

I think it's direct to imagine this issue on the level of the village—i.e. in the early days in small communities we'd be awake to the various personality traits of the various dwellers i.e. nobby! greedy! toughy, titty, thick, ect. bla bla. Of course images are hopeless attempts at understanding each other but we watched greedy bollocks take control of resources, employ us, "bend our arms." The merchants, the power junkies. We all knew it, we watched it happen, why didn't we act on it? "Before your very eyes" compliance!! Maybe live & let live was the ruling cliché. We're still doing it. In Christiana they physically ejected the small dealers, they saw the stuff taking over, they knew it and acted on it. Scruff of the neck evictions.

I'm listening to the radio at the moment Derek Jarmans talking about gay direct action and Christian hypocrisy. Then the D.J. plays

Jethro Tull who now wears tweeds and lords it over a village breeding animals bla bla it's before our eyes *right now*. Roger Daltrey's (the Who) a trout farmer (we won't get fooled again ha! ha!).

Thanks alot Lev.

At Larry Law's (*Spectacular Times*) funeral half wore ties and half didn't.

S.P., London, England

## No "social peace" in Greece

Dear comrades,

We were informed that the American press and TV presented the 18 July riot as a "riot over the nationalist issue of Cyprus" and also that the rioters were "the leftist minority of the National Student Union." This is nothing but *bullshit*.

This is what really happened: The government wanted to present an image of "social peace" during the "visit" of George Bush. The whole police force of Athens (11,000 pigs) was on alert. All demonstrations during the 18th and 19th of July were forbidden. Athens was a city under police occupation. A meeting was held on the 16th of July attended by all anarchist groups and squatted houses of Athens. It was decided that our aim was to destroy the image of "social peace," our only way was violent direct action. We decided 1) Not to participate in leftist protests and bureaucratic "games" (only one group decided to participate in the leftist demonstration) 2) Occupy the Polytechnic and use it as *information and action center*.

For the next two days—using the Polytechnic's xerox machines—thousands of communiques and posters were printed and distributed. More than 100 molotovs were prepared and stores were gathered. Tens of the passing buses were stopped and they "carried" our graffiti all over Athens.

*18th of July:* The day of Bush's arrival. The demonstration organized by leftist students was attacked by cops and—as usual—leftists didn't fight back. Only the few anarchist participants reacted and set on fire the American Express Bank.

When the anarchists (600-700) gathered around the Polytechnic were informed about the police attack, the "usual party" began: barricades, fires, C.S. tear gas, molotovs, burning banks, busses and luxurious cars. The area around the Polytechnic became a battlefield. Later that night, hundreds of nazis and right-wing bastards tried to invade the Polytechnic. They were smashed.

All the arrested comrades are now free. *That's all*.

@  
POB 31261  
10035 Athens  
Greece

## Down to business

Dear folks,

By all means, keep 'em coming! As a drug war POW, I find the theory of anarchism increasingly attractive—for very obvious reasons. Others here also read your rag, although for many it is so intellectual and theoretical that they find it incomprehensible. Nonetheless, it has served as a basis for discussion of alternatives to the status quo. What I find



## LETTERS

most discouraging among my fellow prisoners is the degree of conformity to the prevailing values of society. Bummer.

I especially enjoyed your latest issue—about the S.I. I look forward to part two.

So, what about more attention to the *practice* of anarchism, nuts and bolts stuff, organizing, etc.? I mean, hearing Feral Faun and Bob Black (or whoever) arguing over how many angels can dance on the head of a pin is nice—a mildly amusing diversion—but, hey, let's get down to business! Or is that not what you see as your role? I understand the need for theory, but....

Thanks,  
P.S., Yankton, SD.

## Living proof

Dear *Anarchy*,

I appreciated Boog's column on technology in issue #26, specifically his reference to Amish and Mennonite groups and what he sees as their very sane approach to appropriate technology (*i.e.* technology that does not destroy the community).

I am a Mennonite, born and bred in the midst of the largest Amish settlement in the country (Berlin, Ohio). In the afterglow of years of youthful rebellion against my tradition, I have begun to re-appreciate what the Mennonites and Amish are saying (scratch that—what they are *living* every day) and just how revolutionary their continued presence is in our hellbent, progress-demented, consumer-crazed, mass-media-ized society. Mennonites and Amish are living proof of the existence of cracks in the dominant culture's armor, *real* cracks not theoretical ones. They have been practicing the necessary values of community, mutual aid, practical anarchy and decentralization for centuries without fanfare or fervor—and now all of a sudden people are 'discovering' them and making a big yahoo about it. (Not just Boog but Wendell Berry, Wes Jackson and almost all the appropriate technology types; in this list, we have to also, unfortunately, include Hollywood with the movie 'Witness', etc.)

Anyways, I'm not upset or derisive about the sudden yahoo. I'm happy and quite proud that these generally meek and totally non-self-promoting people are being held up as models for people trying to live more decent and sane lives, people who, as Boog says, have "community relations far less mediated by money and commodities than those in the surrounding culture."

Which gets to the real point of this letter: to present another side (more specifically, *my* side) of the Amish/Mennonite story. Right after Boog's above quote he goes on to say, "They (the Amish and Mennonites) therefore retain enough *community social control* to set limits on their technology, and they have, for the most part, been able to maintain thriving communities..." (emphasis mine). For all the beauty, simplicity, gentleness and quiet radicalness of Mennonite life, I ran from my Mennonite community as fast as I could and am still running today, although the pace has slowed. The Mennonite community life can be

extremely repressive, suffocating and authoritarian. Sure, we are decentralized; every congregation basically governs itself. We might not have a Pope controlling our every bodily secretion, but we do have the incredible pressure of the local church community, which in my mind is worse than a Pope that lives 2,000 miles away because in the church community everybody is a potential Pope, ready to bring down the law of religious and social conformity upon your head, and they live right next door. True, the Mennonite community's religious and social conformity might look different than the mass society's conformity, but this makes it no less repressive. My experience has been that you have to fit into a very narrow Mennonite mold (which, in my community extended all the way to specific puritanical beliefs such as no smoking, drinking or dancing to a general suspicion of all sorts of creativity or spontaneity) or else you're a sinner, a social deviant or just too weird to take seriously. Thus, community norms—instead of a specific governing body or person—become the absolutes that must be unquestionably obeyed.

This is just as true for the Amish, except they indeed do have a specific authority figure governing their lives—the local Amish bishop. You can get kicked out of the church, depending on the reasoning of the bishop, for having rubber buggy tires, putting buttons on your dress, or using a combine. (And, one must remember, getting kicked out of the church means getting kicked out of your family, the community, the subculture, the only world you've ever known.) The reasons the Amish bishop decides combines shouldn't be used are very good—harvesting wheat without using a combine means the entire family and other community members must help and, thus, community is built and maintained through shared work; labor-intensive technology keeps the Amish pace of life slow; it's simply good to do hard physical labor. But these restrictions are determined by one person—the bishop—and then applied in a very authoritarian way (obey this or you will be kicked out). For the most part, the Amish do not make decisions by consensus or other democratic decision-making processes.

As anyone will see, I am, in my long-winded way, trying to illustrate from personal experience the problem with any form of community social control—even when that control is directed to a good end. Many Amish and Mennonite people have individually paid the price of maintaining a "thriving community." To this day I like the idea of community intellectually but am scared witless by it because of my past experience of community as sucking dry my unique individuality. For me, my Mennonite past illustrates perfectly basic issues of social organization: how a society threads the balance between community and the individual; how a voluntary community can in truth be mandatory, for all practical purposes; the way decentralized societies can also be authoritarian. I would continue to encourage people to look to the Amish and Mennonites for their groovy com-

Continued on next page

## out of (d)anger

## Point Of Departure

The current epoch is clearly one which must be abolished. It is one of disaster, one in which the possibilities for a life worth living seem dimmer and dimmer. Madness and misery spread at an unprecedented rate; the everyday and the faraway seem equally terrifying; atrocities are commonplace; everywhere is nowhere. Populations clap and cheer as other populations are carpet-bombed. Alienated youth take over high-tech appliance stores, only to watch themselves die on a wall of television screens. Mountainsides are decimated in order to build and make way for more automobiles. And in this epoch all is rationalized; everything is explained calmly, as if the disappearance of species could be explained calmly, or the complete depletion of a stand of trees. Cynicism is the generalized way of relating to the problems of the world. Thinking about the world and understanding it has given way to the consumption and repetition of massified thoughts. The success story of modern domination is this: its victims have so thoroughly internalized its regimen and order that they actually believe those characteristics to be their own. Domination achieves its ends by allowing people to act as their own oppressor.

Perhaps the most alarming aspect of this world and its progression is the fact that its existence is successfully presented as completely valid, desirable, and unstoppable. It is nearly universally accepted that this point we have reached is the inevitable outcome of human evolution. Domination completes itself by establishing the fact that it is simultaneously necessary and indestructible. People are made to believe that this is all there is and that this is all there ever will be. This world seems to offer no possibility for escape; all change is limited to within its frontiers. It is said over and over again that we must work within the system, but it is that system which is killing us and this planet, and it is killing us systematically. We reproduce this world daily, while working within that system.

But if we are to understand anything at all about this world, we must first realize that it is *not* in any way valid, desirable, or unstoppable. The forces of domination, in their perpetual attack on dreaming and the imagination, have made this lie possible. We are made to believe so strongly in this world, by way of the continual bombardment to the effect that this is the 'natural' outcome of humanity's wandering, for a very precise reason: so we won't act on the desire to create a new world. Domination has successfully prolonged itself for this long, because it has always successfully colonized the future in our heads. This colonization must end; the possibilities for a new world do exist. Those possibilities exist within each of us. The exploration of those possibilities depends on the decision to reject the forces of domination as they manifest themselves in each of us and on the ruthless examination of the mechanisms of this world. In order to destroy the forces of domination and their world we must be able to recognize and understand them in all of their forms and representations.

If we are to end this epoch of disaster then we must define it. It is imperative that we pinpoint the precise workings of this world precisely. The forces of domination do not exist as an intangible monolith. Domination's existence is very real. It is present in the form of the structures and relations of our daily lives. It is the sum of our constraints. It exists, as do we, as a product of its own history. Those structures and relations, and that history need to be exposed and understood. They define our misery. They must be examined, understood, and, in the end overthrown. We must become aware of how domination functions, aware of its weapons and seductions, in our own lives: how it manages our lives. We need to discover how we have internalized its logic and routine, and we must comprehend the process by which we have become our own worst enemies.

A new world can be created. Those of us who claim that things cannot be changed for the better ignore the fact that they change for the worse daily *and* that we participate daily in that change. We are participants in the movement towards disaster. A refusal to take part in this movement is an essential step towards creating the possibility for change in another direction: the direction of paradise. This refusal demands that one challenge oneself; it demands that one constantly question one's own behavior. In order for a willing participant to become a willful rebel one must begin to recreate one's life. Domination is everywhere. Everything must be questioned. Where we are complacent domination hides. Our preconceptions about ourselves only serve to stall our discovery of what we can be. A smug satisfaction with oneself in this world constitutes an attitude which can only serve the dominant order. Those who claim to be making their own decisions and living their own lives already are examples of prisoners whose imaginations merely wander the prison's inner wall. The point is to destroy the prison altogether. One cannot be oneself in this world, one can only begin the process of creating oneself: the process of revolution.

I can only hope that the ideas presented here can contribute to an active critique and attack on the society in which we live. They are not meant to be taken as the final word. This is an attempt at communication. It is the sharing of ideas and explorations. The present effort is an introduction of sorts, a point of departure. Its vagueness insists that in the future I must articulate more precisely. Domination must be dissected; this world must be mapped out. That is the essence of this project. Its success will be measured, firstly, in my ability to rigorously expose the enemy, secondly, in my capacity to suggest the possibilities for liberation, and thirdly, in the reactions of others to this project, how it is received and used.

(d)anger  
POB 203  
Portland, OR. 97201

## LETTERS

## Living proof

Continued from previous page

munity-based, countercultural lifestyles but to do so critically and continually ask (as I myself do), "Community at what cost?"

S.H., Cambridge, MA.

## The problem of national liberation struggles

The problem of national liberation struggles was the hot topic last week at the MUA (Moscow Union of Anarchists) street meeting. Members of the MUA argued that national liberation struggles are a necessary step on the road towards free society; only after people have shaken off 'outside' oppression can they work towards overthrowing oppression (which, in my view, follows that this means within their region or country).

This is not the first time I've heard anarchists argue this position. The logic to it all seems to stem from a logical opposition to imperialist efforts, these anti-imperialist sentiments being strongest felt amongst American and Soviet activists. But here they seem to ignore the various phenomena that tend to develop during the course of the national liberation movements. Among these are:

- 1) A growing feeling of nationalism.
- 2) Increased bigotry and at times violence against members of other (particularly of the 'oppressing') nationalities living within 'their' borders.
- 3) The ascent of new ruling cadres, unlikely to face new opposition for a long time.
- 4) Public perception of problems being created mostly from the outside.
- 5) Repression of groups and individuals who oppose these 'liberation' movements.

In more recent times we've seen

The reemergence of nationalism throughout the world is a phenomenon of importance too great to be ignored.

Nationalism will define us, divide us and dominate us; it has no place in the struggle towards self-realization, free global interaction and liberty.

Categorize humans you cannot. Nations are false divisions. We are one because we are all human beings. We are separate because we all recognize the viability of the free personality. Where and when we were born is nothing but a cosmic accident.

Independence movements are the veneer of national hatreds and political trickery. Don't buy the lie.

Your oppressor isn't just there. It's all around you. It might even be yourself.

Power to the people, not to their nations!

The borders we build are the borders we will have to live behind.

-ENC (Translation by L.A.)

[Note: This statement was given out in Croatia and Slovakia, in Croatia during a time of extreme violence. This, of course, is only a beginning of a critique. Hopefully this topic will be brought up again soon and treated more intensely. -Laure]

also the tremendous role that economics plays in these movements. The ideological leaders of these movements often tend to be the very people who will reap the benefits of any economic (material) 'improvements' and who eventually impose the new domination on the people.

Putting aside the occasional heinous support of fascists by certain Trotskyists running around calling themselves anarchists—which is just outright disgusting—support of these movements is a base for serious critique. Below is a short statement by the Extra-Nationalist Commission, which distributes literature in Prague, Novi Sad, Wrocław, Subotica and Bratislava (no addresses due to underground activities). Comments can be forwarded through this paper.

Laure A., Moscow, USSR

## Child porn entrapment

Dear editor,

I read with interest (in *Anarchy* #24) the comments regarding the dangers of any kind of mailings of material that could be interpreted as child pornography. I wish that I had been so warned six years ago.

The most horrendous example of all time of travesty of justice resulted from my having mailed a commercially-produced magazine containing nude photographs of a male who looked young, even though the magazine declared that it contained photos of "over 18 year olds."

In 1984 I had been induced, as part of the government program to entrap suspected producers of child pornography, into lending someone this magazine, by mail. I fell into the trap, foolishly allowing myself to be caught in the 'sting' operation. This mailing was not even illegal in 1984.

Three years later, in 1987, this magazine was returned to me by a regular mail carrier. Upon delivery, he showed me his FBI badge, and eight men stormed my house, searching for evidence of production and distribution of child pornography. I later found out that they had had my house under surveillance for over a year, hiding in a van down the street, and photographing children going in and out of my home all day. My wife ran a nursery school mornings, and I did tutoring of small groups of youngsters in the afternoon—all perfectly legal, and something we had been doing for nearly 10 years. The investigators did not know this, and were absolutely convinced that illicit and immoral activities with children were taking place in my home.

During the search the investigators were saying to each other: "Hey guys, let's make a McMartin case out of this!" "Let's fuck up these Jews!" "And while we're at it, let's fuck up this Jew town (an affluent Jewish community)."

When they left they threatened us: "We're going to find some way of getting you!" They were incredibly frustrated in that they did not find what they surely expected to find—a child pornography production studio and business. They were determined to find a way of justifying the huge expense of that investigation. Anti-Semitism fueled their attempts to vindicate themselves from the embarrassment

and failure of their investigation.

They went to the parents of my wife's students, and mine, and confronted them with my magazine: "Look at the kind of people you trust your children to!" "What dangers you exposed them to!" Then they brought in the Sex Crimes Police into the picture, and they blatantly lied to these parents, saying: "One child has that he was sexually abused." That was all that was needed to begin the chain reaction of events, by hysterical crusaders out to eliminate child abuse.

By 'interviewing' my students (ages 10-12), for hours at a time, and telling them that "If you really love him (me), then you must do what we tell you to do to help him," they succeeded in getting them to read prepared statements. I am an outstanding teacher, with national and state recognitions, and my students did love me. The method of coercion worked—I was indicted!

So, accompanied by a huge media blitz engineered by the D.A., and only three weeks after

that search, I was charged with hundreds of counts of child sexual and physical abuse, dating back those 10 years: sodomies leading to bleeding, videotaped orgies, abuse of all kinds photographed. All this, without a single shred of hard evidence, not a single photo—only the statements. The events then cascaded so, that my teen-aged son was indicted, along with two other teenaged boys, neither of whom had ever been in my house. Total insanity prevailed in the community, mass hysteria ruled, the media couldn't get enough of the story.

Now three defendants (two of them in their teens) are in prison, on false accusations, serving long sentences—all because I mailed a magazine. Scores of families traumatized because they preferred to believe police lies that I had abused their children, rather than believe their own children when they told them that these things did not happen—all because I mailed a magazine. A community completely destroyed, families of the defendants demolished, witch-

hunts underway, innocent people terrified for their lives—all because I mailed a magazine—the only 'crime' committed by anyone.

Pornography consumers—beware! Big Brother is watching you! Your activities will be observed, your mail scrutinized—your life could be destroyed, as mine was! We live in a police state—believe it!

Very truly yours,  
A.F., Oxford, WI.

Comments on *Anarchy* #24

Howdy,

[...] #24 was very good. I continue to enjoy Freddie Baer and Mikell Zhan's collages, though I think that the particular shade of brown chosen for the cover is, well isn't my favorite. The Berlin Wall and AIDS articles were terrific & timely; I recently read *The Assault on Culture* & came to the same conclusion as Lev: not really worth the dead tree matter. It was just weird, I mean, it barely emphasized any of the good qualities about such utopian currents, some

HANG AROUND FEMINISTS FOR A WHILE, AND YOU ARE BOUND TO HEAR ABOUT:

## THE GREAT MATRIARCHY

(WHEN LIFE WAS IDYLIC)



RETURN NOW TO THE MISTY DAYS OF PRE-HERSTORY, TO THE VAGINALITHIC ERA.



WOMEN, THE CREATIVE, NURTURING AND INTUITIVE HALF OF THE SPECIES, INVENTED: ART, AGRICULTURE, ARCHITECTURE, DOMESTICATION OF ANIMALS, LANGUAGE, MATH, MEDICINE, MUSIC, POTTERY-MAKING, SPINNING, WEAVING AND THE WHEEL, AMONG OTHER THINGS.



SO... THE MEN WERE PUT TO WORK, WHILE THE WOMEN TENDED TO THE CLAN'S SPIRITUAL NEEDS. (WOMEN ALSO INVENTED RELIGION.)



THE GREAT GODDESS RULED THROUGH HER HIGH PRIESTESS; AND SO WERE BORN AUTHORITY, GOVERNMENT, AND LAWS.



EVERYONE KNEW THE FEMALE WAS SUPERIOR BECAUSE SHE BROUGHT FORTH LIFE — MALES HAD NOT YET FIGURED OUT THEIR PART IN THE PROCESS.

By Wendy S. Duke (POB 80044, Akron, OH. 44308). This comic appeared previously in *The Mach!* (POB 3488, Tucson, AZ. 85722).

LETTERS

it barely mentioned anything about at all, with only 4 pages being devoted to 5 different currents. I was hoping to learn a little more about some of these groups, it's not that I don't appreciate his criticisms, they have their points. I wondered why Class War was so singled out? Why not something about the anarchist movement (both militant & pacifist) in general? and why was there nothing about punk in the Americas? & even new wave?

I agree with Bill Meyers that vegetarianism (like all ideologies) can be very fucked up & goofy, but "The critical chicken" article/-letter on consciousness doesn't agree with me. Why is it safe to say that chickens don't think? Or that some animals are more conscious and smarter than others? Chicken's brains are smaller & "qualitatively different from the brains of larger mammals" so maybe that is precisely why one with a larger mammal brain such as me cannot understand what chickens know, &/or they could be so 'conscious' that they can cover up any

of that 'consciousness' that they don't want us to see? I don't really like the term conscious, it makes me think too much of New Age stuff & is very abstract. Consciousness to me would simply be being aware of what is happening around you. I'm not sure if I think that when you are asleep you are not conscious, or merely conscious in a different way.

I don't think that it is all that hypocritical for a vegetarian to be pro-choice on abortion (or anything else including whether you decide or not to eat meat). Being pro-choice is taking the whole picture into account not just the baby (to-be); I won't pretend that it is not a baby. Just as being vegetarian/vegan for me & most others that I know is taking the whole (or at least most, I sure don't know everything!) 'picture' into account: starvation, ecological abuse, deforestation, economical, waste, health as well as animal abuse. To say that something is abused is merely a fact, though still my observation, not a moral point. Most but not all vegetarian

/vegans I know are not opposed to eating animal products out of the dumpster yet most including me don't eat meat out of the dumpster cos we don't wanna get sick (even if the meat hadn't gone 'bad' yet, we'd probably get sick). I mean creating a hierarchical consciousness/karma ladder that says don't eat a dead animal or you'll be filled with negativity or a specific dead animal is absurd & arbitrary. I think if you want to respect something in the world of waste you won't waste that dead body, at least not for a reason of sacred-ness. Which brings me to another point.

The exchanges on "Anarchy and the sacred," while somewhat 'unknew' to me, they had good points and I was glad that the articles appeared. I think I'll just sorta randomly talk/write about "what I think" here. I think that *nothing* is sacred or profane except for *everything*. To me, unlike Feral, I don't think that there is any difference. Maybe the powers-that-be don't "set aside (everything) for a special purpose" but why can't we? It's

still creating a non-hierarchical arrangement (poor word choice). Dogbane's talk of clowns would seem to present an argument against sacredness (here I am referring to the creation of certain things set aside, as Feral wrote of). Just because you don't place something above yourself or above other things doesn't mean you (I) don't appreciate it (i.e. the Shawnee National Forest is really sacred, also I would piss on any of the trees in the forest or anywhere). Sure, I like some things more than others, friends more than government leaders, trees more than plastic buckets, that doesn't mean that I am better intrinsically than Bush or that I don't see the value of what a bucket can do; I also would be more likely to chop up a bucket than a tree (unless I was making shelter or fire) but again that is for practical reasons (the plastic would still be plastic in a different shape, while the tree would be, well, dead) or I would drop a bucket off a cliff rather than a little baby.

I agree with Lev mostly on this issue, specifically: neither scientific nor spiritual & "the package deal." Lev is right on when he says that "religion and enlightenment are really expressions of the same tradition," just like *East vs. West* (today or 9 years ago) same old shit: authority, sacred objects, ideology, the repression of desire, & market economy (etc.). To make "a package deal" on everything pre-civilization peoples had to offer is just silly. Namely, we are so far removed that to assume we can take on their 'ways' would be fatal in the least. Pre-civilization peoples all have many similarities but also have many differences; some appear very anti-authoritarian, while others are very rigid and sexist, and others are different still. Well, hmmm, I guess that's about it for now, less sooner.

Smell your genitals & have some fun, esoteric legume farts.  
B.S., St. Louis, MO.

Suggestions

Dear friends,

One of the myths about anarchy that I hear from people is that anarchy supposed to consist of some chaotic society with murderous vigilantes causing senseless destruction. According to this view, anarchy is devoid of any organization and since "human society could not work without some sort of organization, anarchy will not work." These attitudes exist among most uninformed people.

I think a possible solution to these ignorant attitudes is to devote a half page or page in every issue of *Anarchy* to clearly explain anarchist ideas. I think the explanation on the subscription page is good but should be expanded to include explanations about what "Arm Your Desires!" means. We should also explain why we feel humans are not inherently 'bad' (a common criticism of anarchy). I also think that this page should include some specifics about how anarchy might be organized—I don't mean any rigid absolutes, but just enough discussion to let readers know that anarchy is not a descent into murderous chaos, but rather a sort of disordered order. I think that few non-radicals really

understand the publication *As we see it!* Too often I think anarchists make vague assertions that, unless you already agree with them, you don't understand them. (This is a criticism of *Anarchy* that I have heard.) For example we should explain why mass production alienates people, not just assert it. I'd like to see a basic explanation that deals with the principles, ideals, and myths of anarchy in every issue of *Anarchy*. Practical? Impractical?

I liked Joe Peacott's article about AIDS in *Anarchy* #24 because he explained how the government is interfering with the AIDS issue and how eliminating this government interference would help to better solve the spread of AIDS.

I also enjoyed the response to D.R.'s (of St. Charles, MO.) assertion that fascists would easily take over in an anarchist society. Lev (or whoever) provided a specific example of how Athenians overcame this problem. I think that we anarchists need to concentrate more on how anarchist style solutions (no hierarchy, cooperation...) would solve today's problems, while giving examples from the past for illustration. Personally I know little about anarchist or near anarchist societies that existed in the past.

For greater understanding,  
M.B., Columbia, MO.

Maybe a survivor

Dear Lev & co.,

Many thanks for sending me *Anarchy* #27 so promptly. I had some trouble wading through some of the essays, and skipped others due to time constraints (believe it or not, even prisoners can be too busy to read everything!). But what I did make it through was worth the price alone.

With the exception of Raoul Vaneigem's article, all the essays on kids and child-adult relationships were vital and reeking of common sense & humanism. Shaun Perry should be commended for his revelations and his letter later in the issue, especially. Wendy, Joel & Su were all eminently readable and made a lot of sense to me. I am glad there are voices being raised for child self-determination & against the current witchhunts, of which I consider myself a casualty (well, not exactly—maybe a survivor!). As someone whose child nude photographs were deemed pornographic merely displaying genital nudity, I've seen up close the (perhaps) well-intended defense of kids can lead to victimization of everyone but the members of Uncle's machine. My sentence—5 years—is pretty short compared to some, but 5 years is 5 years....

Thanks,  
"Pink Rocker in Minnesota"

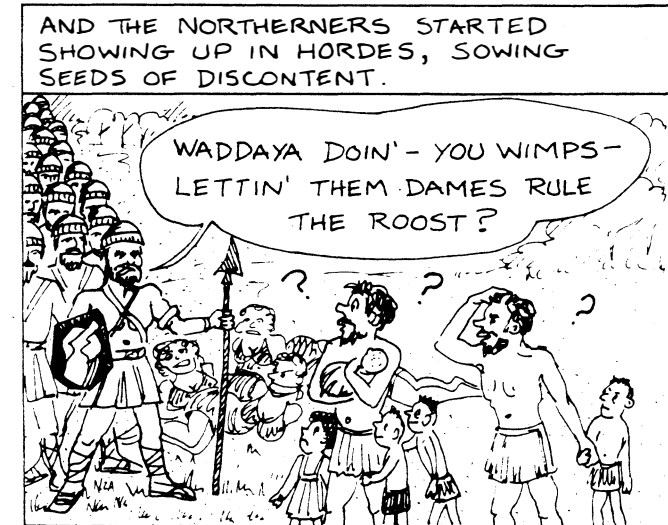
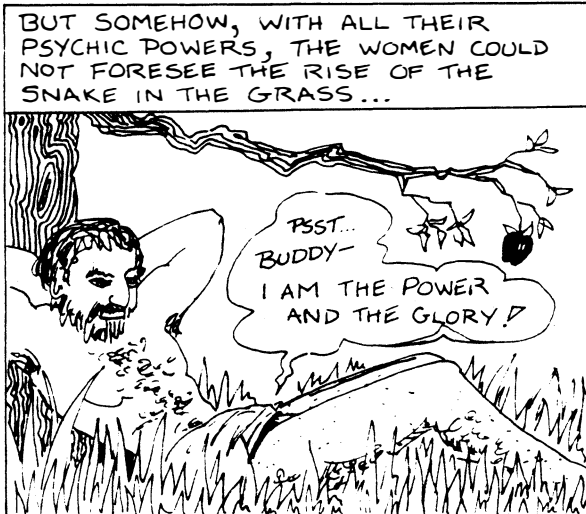
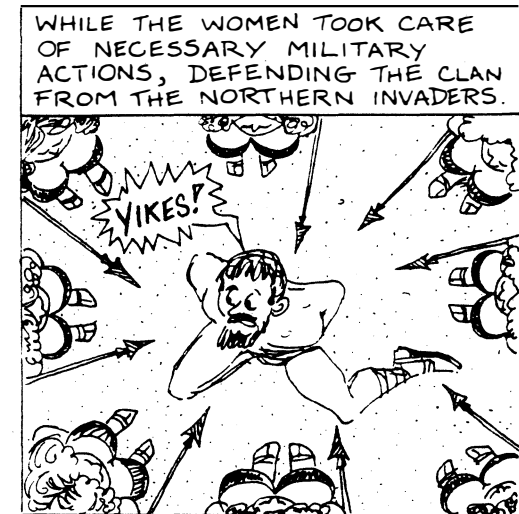
People of Colour?

Greetings,

Peace be yours, my brothers & sisters of the Anarchist Spirit....

First I would like to thank you and all involved for making a Publication such as this one available to individuals like myself (Prisoner).

But I have a Couple of problems, that mayhaps with some  
Continued on next page





## LETTERS

## People of Colour?

Continued from previous page

enlightenment, I hope to Understand.

My first is, Is the Anarchist movement the Same for People of Colour as it is for Anglo-Saxons—don't get me wrong I'm not a Racist or Colour prejudiced; it's just when I read material on the Black Panther Party, SNCC or others, their Movements were wiped-out—Immediately.

Secondly—Why don't you Publish more material on South Africa, and other Dark Countries?

Please be mindful, that by no means am I belittling your Magazine. I mean yours has taught me more in the last year or so, than I've learned in 23 years Watching the World economic Picture—Please Continue to do So—

Now lastly—I recently found a back issue of *Time* magazine, and it had an article on the "Rainbow People" and from what I've read, I welcome any and all Correspondence from Males or Females involved with Such a truly "Anarchist" Group—Please forward me the address of any Organization where I might write to such People.

Well, Lev, I hope my letter Wasn't too redundant, overly long, unreadable or excessively boring—I'm still learning.

Peace & Love,  
Aluta Contina  
(the Struggle Continues)  
Brother Stephen C.A. Farmer  
#152708  
Box 351  
Waupun, WI. 53963-0351

[Although it has been a while since we've run articles on aspects of the South African struggle, we have done so in past issues (for example, the cover story of *Anarchy* #7), and there is also a critical piece at the beginning of this issue. However, most of our news coverage concerns more self-consciously libertarian struggles, whereas, unfortunately, the anti-Apartheid movement has turned to predominantly reformist-statist goals and modes of organization. We're always interested in running news and comment concerning libertarian currents in every region of the world. We'd welcome any information or letters concerning anti-authoritarian tendencies in the anti-apartheid movements in the U.S., Azania or elsewhere.

Regarding the "Rainbow People," perhaps readers can write and help you get in touch with them. -Lev]

## Sexual freedom as "smart bomb"

Dear editor,

Advocating erotic justice & sensual equality for traditionally persecuted and oppressed sexual minorities of all orientations, preferences and lifestyles is risky business. As the activist publisher of *EIDOS*, an 'underground' feminist sexual freedom & erotic entertainment adult quarterly, I believe Feral Faun's articulate and perceptive letter ("More on 'desire politics'," #25/Summer '90) warrants further discussion of the anarchist-feminist Sexual Freedom lifestyle and/or philosophy. I sense many *Anarchy* readers will delight in the knowledge that a world-wide grassroots movement of strident eroto-sexual liberationists exists. Therefore, we must not fear that Emma Goldman's tortured fate

will forever haunt us.

Inherent in the political/cultural Sexual Freedom worldview are the high-minded concepts of Choice, Consent, Diversity, Equality & Tolerance—an alternative to the power/control, bondage/domination model of a sexist, sex-phobic, elitist and authoritarian religious/secular, male-created/male-defined institutional hierarchy. Traditionally, the subordination of women in a biblically-based "civil society" denied women their human rights, including free will and self-determination. Although strains of anarchism and feminism have altered selective aspects of our society's infrastructure (abolition, suffrage, reproductive freedom, etc.), the failure of feminism's "second wave" to manage "empowerment from within" in terms of Sexual Freedom symbolizes Womanhood's enduring weakness.

Today's reactionary 'politically-' & 'sexually-correct' protectionist 'insider' feminist ideologues irrationally ignore the powerful reality of female sensu-sexuality as it relates to national debates over Freedom of Choice and Freedom of Expression. Dworkin's 'groupies' and NOW 'cheerleaders' function as sexual freedom 'revisionists', narrowly focussing on women as victims of male sexual violence while trashing the historic contributions of feminist advocates of Sexual Freedom. Frances Wright (1795-1852), Victoria Woodhull (1838-1927), Tennessee Claflin (1846-1923) and Emma Goldman (1869-1949) all confronted patriarchal authority and challenged society's gender-based/gender-biased taboos—as a natural alternative preferable to the coercive Church/Statesanctioned paradigm of marital procreative intercourse. Similarly, the genre of woman-created literary and artistic erotica (Sappho, Emily Dickinson, Isadora Duncan, Anaïs Nin, George Sand, Virginia Wolfe, Anne Sexton, Erica Jong, Alice Walker, Georgia O'Keefe, Karen Finley, and Annie Sprinkle) provides an alternative to the stereotypical language and images of male-created/male-defined/male-controlled female eroto-sexuality. As the 200th anniversary of the 1792 manifesto, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, approaches, we are reminded of Emma Bovary's tragic romantic illusions (1856) and Flaubert's outrageous *Madame Bovary* censorship trial while recognizing that many 1990s feminists are still unreasonably aligned with those who would "turn back the clock" on Wollstonecraft's proclaiming women as rational human beings with rights equal to those claimed by men; and Emma Goldman's anarchist philosophy affirming "the sovereignty of the individual."

The unfortunate political/cultural alliance forged during the Reagan/Bush '80s (between hard-line, radical left, anti-sex, anti-porn, pro-censorship reactionary protectionist feminists & hard-line, radical right, anti-sex anti-porn, anti-abortion/anti-birth control, anti-gay, pro-censorship "Kinder-Kuche-Kirche" reactionary religious zealots) continues to provide our country's "ruling elites" with a tool to manipulate public opinion; to silence and control dissenting individual and collective pro-sex, pro-choice, liberal, humanist, anti-

censorship voices. In the '90s, however, many clear-thinking Americans are of the conviction that "World Emperor" George Herbert Walker Bush's domestic policy for AmeriKKKa is the political/cultural agenda of reactionary Religious Right ideologues—a convenient, short-sighted 'pay-off' for their continuous financial support and loyalty at the ballot box. Logically, non-compromising Sexual Freedom advocates threaten the "domestic national security" of Bush's Bully Pulpit Theocrats as they engage in America's so-called "Culture War" and "Abortion Rights Civil War." Their goal—to 'seize'/'capture' America for 'righteousness' as a "gift to Jesus" (preferably on his 2,000th 'birthday')—is as threatening to Freedom (our human, constitutional, civil rights) as was the recent Soviet coup attempt by hard-line, old guard Communist coup plotters. The Totalitarians failed miserably in the USSR but they're much more slowly gaining ground in the US Supreme Court.

Energized reformers and revolutionaries must use stronger weapons against the crusading tyranny and medieval oppression of our advancing late-20th century Inquisitors. Avowed activists will recognize the significance of Sexual Freedom as a "smart bomb" in our arsenal of political and cultural weapons.

Yours in freedom,  
Brenda Loew Tatelbaum  
Publisher, *EIDOS*  
POB 96  
Boston, MA. 02137-0096

A yin/yang of anarchy:  
Reply to the anti-workersDear *Anarchy*,

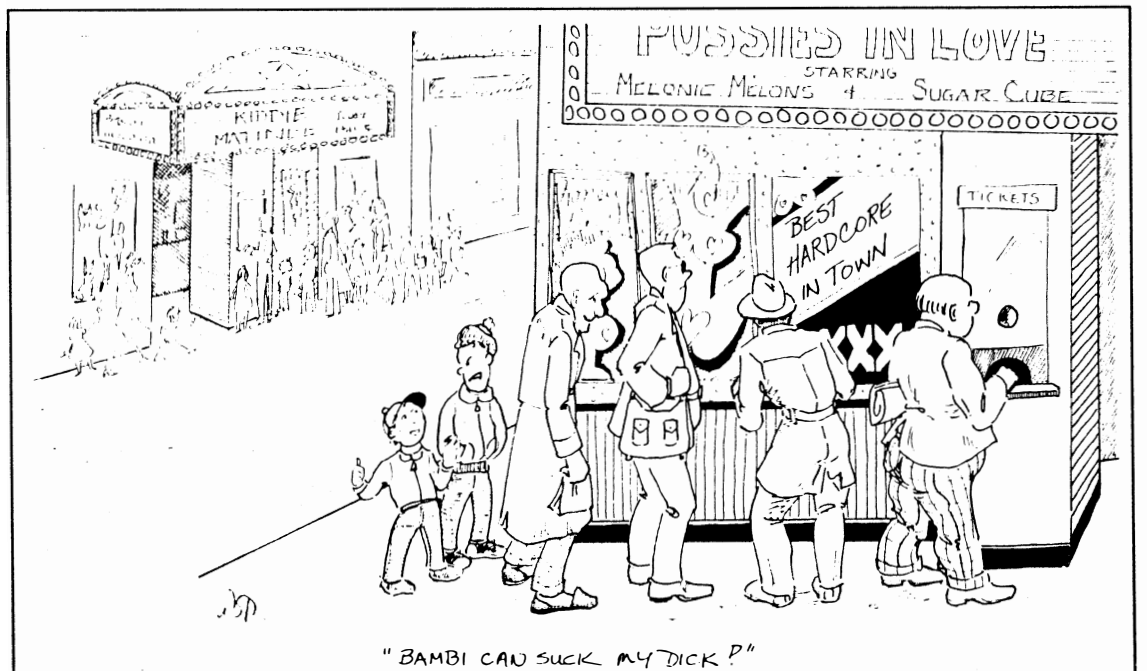
OK, Kill me. I'm guilty of the crime of speaking from the cynical and defeated side of myself that is usually buried under a good deal of energy and enthusiasm. Yes, my letter to you in *Anarchy* #29, "Where are the practical alternatives to work?" was redundant and was written from a certain perspective of ignorance. I am not greatly familiar with the material mentioned by Mr. Black in his patronizing response (issue #30), except for some of the ideas of Ernest Mann, whom I have always appreciated precisely because he does present some practical applications of what could be termed

anarchist principles (despite the fact that he wisely refuses to categorize himself). I greatly enjoyed the review of *I Was a Robot* in the second to last *NAAR*.

There is an impatient, impulsive craving for directly relevant information that people like Ernest Mann help to satisfy, along with inspiring further thought. Other things like a past issue of a magazine reviewed in *Anarchy* (*Coping With the System Without Contemplating Suicide*) and the booklet entitled *Get Free*, that was reviewed in issue #30, fall within this category also. I agree 100% that there should be a revolution for physical, mental, spiritual and sexual freedom, and that reforms are just part of the problem rather than solutions. But call me a pessimist, self-defeating, etc., I don't feel we'll see a society without wage labor anytime in the near future (although then again, things could become turned on their head tomorrow morning). So why not take as many steps as possible to empower people now, even people who aren't sold on some label such as anarchism? Every step taken away from hierarchy and economic greed and toward personal and collective real life is a step closer to the consciousness level that would be needed for any kind of "definitive break" or "absolute divergence" from the sickening, life killing modes of operation that thrive in the world as we know it and that help make it hell. But this is not a new thought of course. Is it more empowering when someone who is not an anarchist joins or supports a co-operative, genuinely socially useful enterprise as opposed to when they become depressed contemplating the abolition of work while sitting in a polluting hunk of metal, on the way home from work in a traffic jam, with bills to pay and a family to feed? Ok, maybe that's a little one sided. But the point I'm trying to make is that to a great number of people that is their day to day reality and if they are to come across an anti-work issue which they can't even relate to (due to its lack of alternatives) then it seems likely that they could easily dismiss the anarchist press as useless theory, divorced from their lives. I felt that anti-work issue dealt with the subject as if readers were already in complete accord with the anti-work argu-

ment. This is what I meant when I said "cliques." Nowhere was I attacking Bob Black's views, only the fact that such a scant representation of them appeared in the anti-work issue. I am well aware of his activities and have been inspired by his unrelenting critical spirit (but this is beside the point). If someone new to anarchist thought reads about collective social experiments in the past and present, and discovers that there have been alternatives in the histories of many countries (Spain, Italy, Russia pre-Bolsheviks, France, and anywhere else) then the kinds of questions that I proposed would not be such familiar standby occurrences. I get the impression that everyone considered me a blatant fool for bringing this up. Mr. Black's assumptions regarding my "campus leftist, prematurely closed orthodox anarchist ideology" suggest to me that he is being too defensive. In no way am I defending "self-management of business as usual" when I talk about collectives and such. Old style anarcho-syndicalism I feel would be better than what we have now, but it is still no real alternative. But when the great majority of industry and wage labor has vanished I feel the legitimate needs of human beings should be met in a collective, consensus based manner, incorporating play and lack of hierarchy. This could be construed as "leftist" I suppose (I didn't state this view in the letter). In this way the short sighted, pro-industry and mass-production values would not be present.

At the same time I have a great affinity with the more feral expression of anarchism and empowered life as advocated by Feral Faun, Schiz-Flux, and many others because the realm of brain/body/spiritual liberation is vitally important in helping to create empowered life in the first place. I would much rather participate in a mud people offensive than carry a sign and talk coolly and rationally to the lapdog press. Having vision beyond a re-working of the immediate present reality avoids the "lesser of the two evils" ditch. Going wild can be a wonderful tool in the search for freedom, but it's only one of many. I get the feeling too often when I see snide, orthodox one-upmanship style attitude displays that some people



Wendy S. Duke (POB 80044, Akron, OH. 44308).

aren't willing to allow others to practice in the manner that is best for them. Forget the fact that, as is well stated in *As we see it!*, that people are at different levels of awareness and practice. When anarchist A and Anarchist B waste time trying to impose their superior worldviews on each other it seems much like a reflection of the bullshit "liberal vs. conservative" dichotomy which is why dialogue should be entered into with respect and appropriate humility. I'm not calling for mindless uniformity, but a celebration of differences. I always want to be able to see the contradictions between theory and practice in my life and everywhere else so that they can be worked on. The compromises that many people make, including anarchists and alternative types of all sorts, help prop up the corrupt reality that is then worked against in subcultural specializations of rebellion (this isn't always the case of course).

Just as the side of life that's wild and unrestrained by all the socialized domestication isn't satisfied by organization, so the 'practical' side isn't satisfied by continuous feral adventure. I think there should be a balance between the two (and more)—A Yin/Yang of anarchy that has the ability to speak to the lives of the 'unconverted' as well as empower people who are already committed.

I thank you for letting me clarify myself and ramble. Now let's talk about revisionism, chauvinism, class collaboration, and the worker's Duty to Resist Imperialism because I need some new material for my newspaper, *The Worker's Revolutionary Campus Leftist Brigade Clearing House Sweepstakes Gazette* which I distribute for brownie points from all my Marxist professors, whom I regard as the highest expression of human achievement.

With honesty and humility,  
C.W., Carbondale, IL.

#### Lev Comments:

#### Theory is practical

Although you have voiced some valid points, a large part of what troubled me with your original letter still troubles me this time around.

One example is the huge gap between your conceptions of 'theory' and 'practice', or the 'theoretical' and the 'practical', in regards to work and the opposition to work. In conventional ideological terms, of course, theory and practice never mix. Theory is for clever managers and practice is for relatively mindless workers or consumers. Any radical approach must break down this duality, showing how the *practice* of management (literally "reigning in") and the *theory* of worker & consumer subservience constitute the inevitable flipside of the ideological coin. Both aspects of the theory-/practice dichotomy need to be understood and transcended in a unity of theoretical & practical negation.

In a similar manner, you seem to want to counterpoise 'useless' & 'depressing' anti-work theory to eminently "practical alternatives" to work. However, this subverts the overall intention of the anti-work stance which requires a unity of theory & practice. Your *theory* of purely "practical alternatives" implies that an uncritical *practice* can op-

# 10 Tips For How To Stop Working

**1. Want to stop.** Make use of everything which can strengthen your desire: slavery, a lack of excitement, and a salary are dangers to the health of all, and particularly to creativity.

**2. Stop completely.** Because the worker increases his or her dose of work with the slightest desire to consume, half-measures are ineffective. Experience shows that it is easier to stop abruptly all at once, rather than progressively.

**3. Choose the right moment.** Preferably right away. The present period, with its living conditions of interchangeable misery, is particularly favorable. Following a holiday, when the need often disappears spontaneously, you can decide not to start again.

**4. Immerse yourself in a favorable atmosphere.** Stopping at the same time as the person you are living with, friends or work colleagues and helping each other psychologically is effective. Often, at the same time, this permits not living in an atmosphere of fear (one to be avoided to the utmost during work detoxification). Making the people that you know aware that you're stopping can be of help.

**5. Get rid of temptation.** Make work and its accessories (car, television, alarm clock) vanish from your environment. No longer wear a watch or have a clock at home. Avoid getting into situations where you are used to occupying spare time with your preferred activities (puttering, dull reading material, films, shopping). Avoid public transport and certain festivities, such as political meetings, during which docile renunciation is habitual.

**6. Influence your conscious and unconscious mind** by affirming your decision to stop working and by insisting positively on the expected benefits. Do not hesitate to repeat out loud several times each day, "I choose to stop working and my health is improving every day," or any other positive formula of your choice.

**7. Breathe deeply** in order to relax and to feed oxygen to your nervous system. Nerve cells, in effect, consume four times as much oxygen as the cells of the rest of the body, meaning that they are particularly damaged by a lack of air. Breathe deeply three or four times, slowly and emptying your lungs properly, the moment you feel the need to breathe. Departures and changes of atmosphere are highly recommended.

**8. Refuse all improvements** in order to keep your sights fixed on nothing but the totality. Don't beat around the bush. Pump in the enthusiasm, especially the first days. Look for stimulants (breaking free from all social restraints) and heavy, convoluted arguments with your ex-bosses. Drink between meals in order to activate the elimination of moroseness. Give priority to the healthiest activities—the ones you participate in directly—and to natural, vital needs which are rich in pleasure (love) and to full moments which are rich in satisfaction (departures, parties). To avoid nervousness, which frequently occurs during proletarian detoxification, naps are important. Certain subversive readings can be added to respond to the particularly important need to destroy the system during the detoxification cure. Reduce stress, fear and hesitation in order to avoid losing weight.

**9. Get enough sleep.** Because the hours when everything is possible are those after midnight, go to bed late.

**10. Get the most radical ideas and what goes beyond them flowing** in order to fight uncertainty, which occurs frequently when wage labor ceases.

**And if you wish to remain successful, always be sure to refuse the first job offer.**

*From the first issue of Mordicus (BP 11, 75622 Paris Cedex 13, France). Translated by Michael William, Montréal, Québec.*

pose work. In the case of this ideological conception the radical approach must include the understanding that as long as "practical alternatives" are quarantined from critical theory, they will remain easily co-opted by capitalism & state. Sure, people can—on an individual or small group basis—devise what may be called "practical alternatives" to some aspects of the work economy, like taking up gardening & horticulture in order to obtain food. People can form buying clubs, cooperatives, collectives, or 'work'-parties with friends to organize some aspects of consumption and/or production on the margins of the economy. And much of this may well prove worthwhile in mitigating the devastating effects our lives all suffer under the present reign of wage-labor & commodity fetishism. But in itself, this is

never enough to constitute an anti-work praxis. To do that would require a generalized theoretical understanding of the place of work in civilization and a will to abolish work as an institution in concert with others.

You don't seem to have noticed that the anti-work articles we've run are already an attempt to "take as many steps as possible to empower people *now*." Without understanding the global context in which a genuine refusal of work can begin, mindlessly 'practical' alternatives will only provide a way of adapting oneself to the conditions of life under the domination of capitalism. There are no simple 10-step programs for quitting work (despite the parody on this page!), because work is a social problem which requires vast changes for its abolition. Sure, people

could benefit from cutting back on their work time whenever possible. But that alone doesn't mean much if their "free time" is used to watch TV or go shopping. People can even quit their jobs, but if they still draw an income from savings and bank interest (like Ernest Mann does) they're still dependent on the alienated labor of others (not to mention their own previous years of labor congealed in their savings). There is no simple escape from work. And any complex escape will require both practice *and* theory.

#### Question to Zerzan

Question to John Zerzan re: "Beginning of Time, End of Time" essay in *Elements of Refusal*: How do you account for the Mayans' incredible architectural achieve-

ments and "elaborate and accurate" astronomical calendars, devised—in isolation—in the jungles of Central America *thousands* of years ago? I am trying to discount the theory that they were emissaries from another planet.

Quizically,

Paula Sullivan, London, England

Ps. To Lev, re: reply to a letter in your double issue (#20-21/Aug.-Oct.'89), on 'essential' contemporary anarchist works: *Situationist Anthology*. Yes! *The Right to Be Greedy*. Yes! *Elements of Refusal*. Yes! *Gestalt Therapy*?...could you explain why? (I have a distinct dislike for Fritz Perls.) Also, I appreciate your bemoaning the usual threadbare and arse-over-tit interpretations of Stirner and 'egoism'. Why don't *you* put it to rights? I respect your defence of 'Saint Max', but don't you think his "appalling verbosity" (Woodcock) contributed to his somewhat muddled public image?

#### Lev comments:

#### Goodman & Stirner

Fritz Perls, Ralph Hefferline & Paul Goodman's *Gestalt Therapy* was included on my list of essential anarchist works, not because Fritz Perls was nominally one of the authors of the book, but rather because the well-known U.S. anarchist Paul Goodman was primarily responsible for writing the second half of the book—the more theoretical part. Much of the first half of the book, consisting of exercises, also has the imprint of Goodman's prose style and perspectives. Where psychotherapy is concerned, this is the best anarchistic work available of which I am aware, not the least because it is entirely oriented towards self-directed analysis and re-integration. Here in Columbia, we formed a small group a few years ago to practice and discuss the exercises & theory of this book. And I would recommend the practice elsewhere.

Regarding Stirner, I'd like to try setting the record straight on his behalf, but so far have had no luck finding the time to write anything. I would hope that it should be fairly obvious that with so many of my energies required for the maintenance of this magazine, I simply haven't had time to do the kind of writing I'd otherwise like to attempt. My dilemma has been (1) spending all my 'free' time working on publishing a magazine so that I can get my writing into print to the proper readers, only to have no time to do any very serious writing, or (2) I could spend my time doing the serious writing I'd find satisfying, only to have no suitable place to have it published if this magazine weren't on the scene.

I would never call Stirner's wonderfully playful, if sometimes repetitive, prose "appalling verbosity." One might want to balance Woodcock's charge against Stirner with a reading of Woodcock's autobiography (which I happen to be reading now). Woodcock is certainly no model of *sparse* prose!

#### Pot shots

Dear Lev & co.,

As a *serial taker of pot shots* I submit the following:

1. In my unattributed article on the delusive "Anti-Anarchist Con-

Continued on next page



## Pot shots

Continued from previous page

spiral" [Note: Attribution was accidentally omitted from this column on page 24 of *Anarchy* #30, though it was included in the contents listing on page 2.] I offered to mail my book *The Abolition of Work and Other Essays* to libraries at cost, which I underestimated at \$3, it is slightly over \$4. As amended the offer stands. \$4 will do it. In fact let me broaden the offer to include the incarcerated.

2. "A feminist" who wonders what a cuntish question is should ask the Guy who refused to answer one: Guy Debord (whom I am told is holed up in a chateau on some kind of trust fund or stipend). Meanwhile, I would define a cuntish question as one a dickhead refuses to answer.

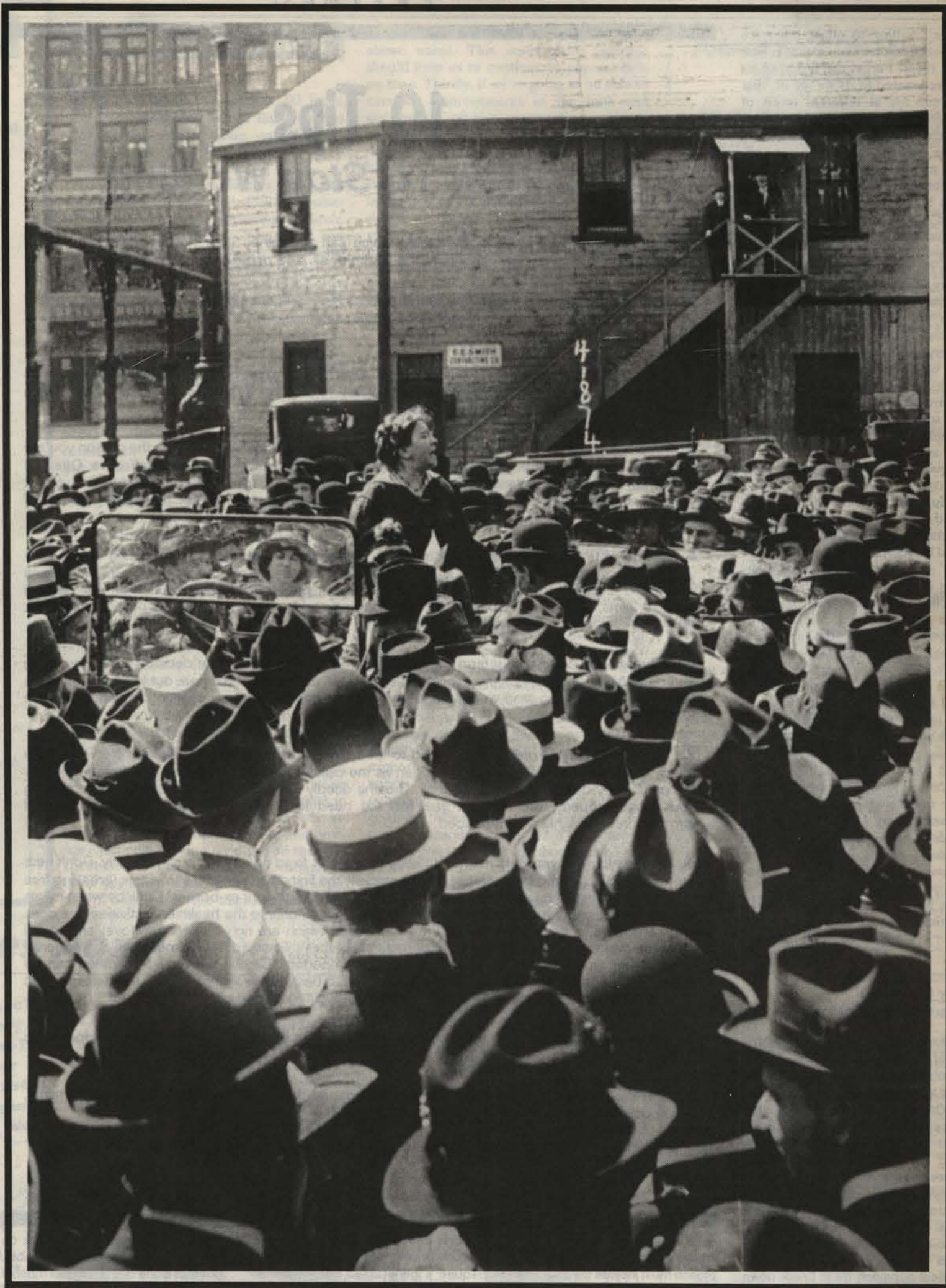
3. Reviewing the execrable Ace Backwords (as I have), Ben G. Price suggests that anal retentives see only smut there. That is true, but an objective observer in this case sees little more. As the infamous author of "Feminism as Fascism" I daresay I am as antagonistic to feminist (or any other) puritanism as anybody but even feminists make some accusations which are true. If Backwords had much more going for him I'd excuse that but in fact what he cranks out is mediocre humorless Berkeley hippieshit.

4. Laure A. is obviously aglow over her 15 minutes of fame as a revolutionary wannabe—a "barri-cadist," as she styles herself—but by her own account she's a barri-cado-masochist, while she and her comrades were off taking snapshots of tanks to publish in *Anarchy*, 'thugs' stole all their anti-tank weapons, their Molotov cocktails. If 'thugs' eat their lunch what chance did they have against the Red Army? Who were these 'thugs' anyway?

5. As funny as it is revealing is S. Wray's Eastern European scene report on the (then East) German anarchists with no Western publications except "*On Gogol Boulevard* and *Processed World*." This confirms what many have always suspected, that Bob McGlynn's *OGB* is to Eastern Europe dissidents what *PW* is to dissident office workers: a ploy by crypto-Marxist ideologues to target a virgin market, dominate it, and insulate it against other, more radical perspectives. Both McGlynn and the *PW* control group privately acknowledge they are Marxists, "council communists" to be sure but nonetheless the last thing Eastern Europeans or American office workers want any part of (*PW*'s wealthy founder Caitlin Manning once told Freddie Baer she felt she was in the vanguard). McGlynn of course has often appeared in and tirelessly promotes *PW* in the leisure afforded to him, as to Manning, by family money. I am happy McGlynn's role in restricting the flow of material to his Eastern wards has been confirmed by someone of his own persuasion, Wray. *Anarchy* might want to reconsider its policy of publishing news on Easterners contactable only "c/o *On Gogol Boulevard*," i.e., if Bob McGlynn deems you politically correct. The Communists have fallen. These people have nothing to fear any more from Western contacts. Why is Bob McGlynn Berlin-Walling them off from the West? Bob Black

POB 66153

Albany, NY. 12206



Emma Goldman addressing a crowd in Union Square, New York City, 1917. Reproduction by Mikell Zhan from an original photo.

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